AUM

Point out the "Way."—however dimly,
and lost among the host—as does the evening
star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—*The Voice of the Silence*

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KARMA

Among the numerous Sanskrit words which are fast being absorbed into the ordinary English vocabulary is the word "Karma." Literally it means "action," but its most generally accepted meaning in the popular mind is that process in Nature so aptly described by St. Paul: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Karma, in Indian philosophy, embraces not only visible deeds, but also mental and moral actions. Furthermore, its sway is not restricted to the human kingdom, but is universal and, this being so, Karma is looked upon as the basic Law of Nature.

The Law of Causation recognized by science in the physical universe is extended to the moral and mental universes. The ancient philosopher solved the problem of Fate and Free Will in this Law of Karma, which the modern scientist has not done in his Law of Causation. The metaphysical aspect of causation is to be found in the Chain of *Nidanas;* but this profound metaphysical chain cannot be grasped by the modern mind until it has purged itself of false notions of theology, science and philosophy, or the cant of dogmatic sectarian beliefs.

The mind of the modern man, however, is now sufficiently educated to grasp the psychological aspect of Karma as it pertains to his own daily experiences. He can see justice inherent in it, and can appreciate the fact that "it knows not wrath nor pardon," although he may forget this philosophical truth when ills overtake him. While he is quite familiar with the proposition that as a man soweth, so shall he also reap, he is not equally at home with its corollary, that a man is *now and here* reaping that which he has already sowed. The religious dogma of a future heaven or hell, where rewards or punishments will be meted out to him, stands in

his way. According to the doctrine of Karma the future is locked up in the present which, at the same time, is also the unfolding past. Again, man's false understanding of the facts of heredity prompts him to blame his progenitors unto the third and fourth generation for his present afflictions or tendencies. Karma does not negative heredity except as a primary cause; heredity is an instrument for the manifestation of Karmic effects.

The knowledge of the Law of Karma is eminently practical, for it changes the learner's attitude to the problems of life. Since a man reaps as he sows, then it is surely more than worth his while to sow correctly and intelligently. Again, since a man is reaping what he has sowed in the past, then his present obstacles, vicissitudes and sorrows are a legitimate flowering and one, moreover, which is not purposeless. A correct and intelligent use *now and here* of this legitimate harvest increases and deepens his experience and proves to him the truth of Edward Carpenter's statement that "the pains which I endured in one body were powers which I wielded in the next."

Karma is not fatalism for its effects may be counteracted by our present thoughts and acts, and then the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects. It is taught that—

> Measures taken by an Ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of Karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted.

Of greatest practical value is the fact that it is in the psychological aspect of our being that the seeds of causes are sowed which sprout and become visible effects in our physical nature. The inner purpose is the motor power by which the outer movements manifest.

Generally a man is valued by his words and deeds—and who troubles about his motives, feelings and thoughts? Intellectual dishonesty is not regarded as a crime; he who looketh on a woman with lust is not called an adulterer; a cesspool mind is not shunned as contagious—for who bothers about another's private thoughts? But the Upanishad says that "verily a person consists of purpose (*kratumaya*)." Again :—

> As is his desire, such is his resolve; as is his resolve, such the action he performs; what action he performs, into that does he become changed.

A simple experiment in the laboratory of a man's own consciousness will reveal to him the absolute truth of the above, and then he will be able to say :—

As I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand.

THE PHENOMENA OF JESUS

[Some of the conclusions drawn by **Mr. Beresford** are very debatable, and feeling this to be so, we sent his essay to a Christian friend for some comments. **Mr. D. Srinivasan** kindly acceded to our request and we print his article along with that of Mr. Beresford.—EDS.]

I.—TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS

According to the history given in the *Jataka*, Gautama went out into the wilderness at the age of twenty-nine and spent six years in meditation before, under the Bo tree, he had the final vision that determined the manner of his future life. Jesus who, if we can trust the chronology of the Evangelists, realised the nature of his mission at about the same age as that at which Gautama left home, spent no more than forty days in this intermediate period of preparation. Among the lesser adepts such as Saul of Tarsus or Francis of Assisi, we find conversion coming out of the sky with a sudden burst of enlightenment that turned one from his persecution of the Christians, the other from revelling with his rich companions. But whereas St. Paul seems to have passed through no disciplinary period, St. Francis spent three years in contemplation and charitable work before he finally set out to preach his gospel and heal the sick.

I have taken these four familiar illustrations because I have been wondering as to the nature of the preparation made by Jesus for his ministry. I have heard it suggested that the informing Spirit did not enter into him until he was thirty years old, but if this suggestion intends any kind of possession by a free spirit finding reincarnation in a developed physical body, I must reject it. If, however, the suggestion may be regarded as a metaphor, we can find some interpretation on the assumption that until the human personality of Jesus had reached a certain degree of perfection, the immortal principle, the true ego, was unable to find expression on the physical plane.

The "perfection" in question is, of course, attained only by the unification or integration of the many "selves" that make up the human entity—from the deep-seated unconscious principles that are responsible for the purely automatic functions of the body and maintain the processes of metabolism, up to that ephemeral, inconstant creation of the intelligence that constitutes our idea of the kind of person we think ourselves to be. The unification of these "selves," the realisation and control of them in the consciousness, is the object of all those who seek to identify themselves with the One in the Many, the single aim of Yoga, Tao, Occultism or Mysticism; and the degree of attainment will be proportional to the experience already won by the true ego through uncounted incarnations. By con-

stant effort we may earn "good Karma" and shorten the number of our incarnations; but the "young soul" can never attain perfection in a single lifetime.

These are theosophical axioms, which I have recapitulated, because I want to apply them to the very imperfect story of the Life of Jesus given by the four Evangelists in relation to that preparation of himself whereby he was able to make his human body the agent of the Spirit. This material, omitting the story of the conversation in the Temple at the age of twelve, is furnished in parable form by the synoptic Gospels (St. John makes no reference to it). Of these St. Mark's account gives no detail, but those of St. Matthew and St. Luke are almost identical; the only important difference being that the order of the three temptations is not the same in the two Gospels. I adopt St. Luke's order as unquestionably the right one.

In this account—as also in St. Matthew's—the first temptation is for Jesus to exercise his power, and satisfy his hunger by turning stones into bread. For the proper reading of the parable, however, this temptation to exercise spiritual power should not be interpreted in the same sense as in the third temptation,—according to St. Luke; St. Matthew wrongly places it second. In this first instance the spiritual power intended, as I see it, is no more than that we all possess, the power of choice between concession to bodily impulses and the search for holiness or, as Emerson puts it, the choice between "truth and repose." To seek the truth implies effort, the acceptance of repose, the concession in varying degrees to the desires of the lower centres. And in such a sense we may read the parable of this first temptation as the preliminary refusal of Jesus to be controlled by the urgency of the animal desires, such as hunger, thirst, sex, the longing for ease and comfort, the last named representing that inertia (*Tamas*) of the satisfied flesh which it is the function of the spirit to overcome.

If we can judge from the Gospel narratives of Christ's subsequent life, his method must have been that of Raja-Yoga, the expression of the true spiritual impulse to serve mankind. We find him loving and compassionate, and his teaching for the most part upholds the same principle. Nevertheless—a fact for which I have no explanation to offer—there are one or two indications of Hatha-Yoga which seem completely at variance with the general tenor of Christ's instruction. The most marked of these are found in (1) "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee cut them off"...etc. (*St. Matthew* XVIII, 8–9) and, (2) "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother"...etc. (*St. Luke* XIV, 26), texts that imply the necessity for (1) intense physical discipline of the Fakir type, and (2) separation from human intercourse. But, whatever the source of these contradictory verses, there is sufficient evidence to prove that Christ, himself, practised neither physical self-torture nor isolation from the world. Nor should we expect that he would do so.

The second temptation assumes, as I see it, the stage in which the adept having won control of the body is lured by the wish to rule mankind by the intellect. Christ sees himself as able to control "all the kingdoms of the world," able to impose his prevailing will on mankind and compel them to maintain the outward appearance of decency and order. He could become the Supreme Dictator who might establish a new world order by virtue of his own perfect self-control and the transcending force of his wisdom. The temptation here is not to ease and riches—he had passed beyond that—but to the exercise of power. He rejects it because he knows that mankind cannot be compelled to follow the way of self-development by the imposition of any outside control. Each individual has to exercise the choice for himself or herself. There is no short cut to holiness. The true self can learn only by age-long experience.

The final temptation is far the most subtle of the three. Jesus's refusal to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple in order to demonstrate his mastery over the laws governing physical matter, proves that he has reached the full powers of the great initiates. He knows now that he can work what appear to us as "miracles." He has made himself the instrument of that spiritual law which over-rides the "natural laws" formulated by science and so rarely transcended within human experience. But he knows also, as the agents of "black magic" do not, that he must not exercise his powers for show, or for self-glorification. It is true that the Gospel narrative gives instances in which Jesus appears to have done this thing. The blasting of the fig-tree, the turning of water into wine, the walking on the lake of Galilee, are cases in which the use of his supernal powers seem open to criticism. But we must not expect to find in Jesus one consistent aspect of perfection. It is obvious to the unprejudiced student of the Gospels, that he had not completely conquered what, judging by the highest possible standard, may be called his lower impulses. On more than one occasion he gave way to anger, and we may presume that he sometimes yielded to the temptation to exhibit his power over matter.

All that concerns us in this article, however, is the parable of the temptations; and I suggest that we should accept it not as the account of a particular happening that occurred either at the end or in the course of the forty days fasting in the wilderness, but as presenting the phases of his training over a period of years. In this aspect it is entirely congruous with all we know of the preparation for adeptship, but we are left to guess in what circumstances that preparation was made. If these three progressive lessons were learnt in full daily intercourse with mankind, they furnish an exception to the general rule. For it appears that a long period—six years in the case of Gautama—of absorbed contemplation is an essential element of the discipline necessary to attain complete unification of the self. After

that atonement the great Teachers re-enter the world to carry out that mission whose fulfilment has been the object of the further reincarnation they have voluntarily undertaken in the cause of humanity. But, so far as we know, whatever physical instrument has been chosen for their manifestation, that instrument must be perfected by discipline before it can become the simple agent of the spirit.

Are we, then, to regard the case of Jesus as an exception? Can we assume that he, and he alone, was able to perfect himself and win complete self-realisation while remaining in contact with the world, needing no more than those forty days of solitary fasting to achieve his final purpose? It may be so; but having regard to our almost complete lack of information as to the early years of Jesus, that assumption is not essential. The forty days, for example, may represent a much longer period of time, "forty" being one of the figurative, emblematical numbers common in the Bible. Moreover the chronology of the Gospel narratives as a whole is admittedly vague. Even the age of Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, given as thirty by the translators, * is anything but precise and some commentators put His age at thirty-two, basing this estimate on the chronology of St. John's Gospel.

The "higher criticism" of the last thirty years has done much to counter the dogmatic assertion of the Christian Churches that the Bible must be regarded as verbally inspired, and has given it in consequence the vital interest of a historical document.† It is, nevertheless, a document of a peculiarly provoking kind, and we must always regret that there was no contemporary historian to give an outside account of the main facts of Christ's life as seen by an intelligent reasonably unprejudiced observer. And one of the most unfortunate omissions, from some points of view, is that which I have taken as the subject of this article. As we have seen, however, there are grounds for the inference that the preparation of Jesus for perfecting the physical instrument of the body he had assumed, followed the traditional stages.

If we read St. Luke's account of the temptations as a parable, (possibly spoken by Jesus himself to his imperfectly comprehending disciples?), it may stand as a general confirmation of the principles enunciated in the ancient religious teaching of India—as indeed, do, also, so many of Christ's recorded sayings. The "forty days" will then represent an indefinite period of retreat from the world, and as I have attempted very briefly to indicate, the progressive stages follow, on broad lines, the traditional course of self-discipline essential to the integration of the self.

J. D. BERESFORD

* The phrase is, (St. Luke III. 23) "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age."

† A very interesting account of the sources of the Gospels is to be found in *Jesus the Unknown*, by Dmitri Merezhkovsky.

II.—MIRACLES OF JESUS

Many people have doubted, because of the paucity of evidence, whether Jesus ever did perform the miracles ascribed to him in the Gospels. But in his interesting article Mr. Beresford assumes that the miracles did occur, and this being so, most rightly contends, in my opinion, that Jesus had gained mastery over the laws governing physical matter; also that he knew "as the agents of 'black magic' do not, that he must not exercise his powers for show, or self-glorification." But Mr. Beresford goes on to say that "the Gospel gives incidents in which Jesus appears to have done this thing." The turning of the water into wine at the Marriage Feast and the walking on the water at Galilee are cited as cases in point. The inevitable inference is that Jesus occasionally dipped into black magic, but I do not think that Mr. Beresford in his heart would admit this stern, though logical, conclusion. He holds that to "the unprejudiced student of the Gospels it is obvious that Jesus had not conquered what, judged by the highest standard, may be called his lower impulses." His giving way to anger and yielding to the temptation to "show off" his power over matter are the proofs offered us for this.

I must entirely dissent from Mr. Beresford here. I do not know—nor does any student of the Gospels know—why Jesus performed miracles. But, bearing in mind the general tenor of his life and ministry, would it not be safe to assume he had some valid purpose?—and the purpose that leaps to the eye is that of the instruction of those who witnessed the phenomena. The idea that he acted for show or self-glorification is untenable.

Does Mr. Beresford mean to imply that when Jesus is supposed to have given way to anger, that he, in plain words, lost his temper? When one loses one's temper, one's whole inner being is upset; and if this is so in the case of the ordinary average man, in the case of an advanced Occultist the psychic damage would be irreparable.

May it not be that Jesus by the strength of his impersonal protests intentionally gave the impression of anger to outsiders? When he drove the money-changers forth from the Temple, even using a whip, he was demonstrating this. Are not strong measures legitimate and right in defence of a principle? We have the classical example of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and thousands of years later we have Abraham Lincoln plunging his country into civil war in defence of a principle. If a man like Abraham Lincoln had to act as he did to preserve the integrity of the Republic over which he presided, what might it not be necessary for an adept to do for the preservation of a Spiritual Republic?

D. SRINIVASAN

THE SONG OF THE HIGHER LIFE

XIA.—THE YOGA OF THE PERVADING POWERS

[Below we publish the eleventh of a series of essays founded on the great textbook of Practical Occultism, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Each of these will discuss a title of one of the eighteen chapters of the Song Celestial. The writer calls them "Notes on the Chapter Titles of the Gita"—but they are more than notes. They bring a practical message born of study and experience.

This particular instalment continues the study on the tenth chapter, Vibhuti-Yoga.

Sri Krishna Prem is the name taken in the old traditional manner prevailing in India by a young English gentleman when he resolved to enter the path of Vairagya, renouncing his all, including the name given to him at birth. He took his tripos at Cambridge in Mental and Moral Sciences and is a deep student of Indian Philosophy. Away from the world but serving it with faith he lives in the Himalayas, and is esteemed highly for his sincerity, earnestness and devotion.—EDS.]

Just as a man, though having as his birthright mind with all its powers of thinking, yet has to learn by slow and arduous steps how to unfold those powers, so the disciple who has now united mind with *buddhi* must slowly and with effort open up its powers of vision. The mental life in which he still is, for the most part, rooted, must be transmuted by the higher vision. A man born blind, but who has gained his sight, finds for some time the new sense unfamiliar, and rather trusts his highly cultivated sense of touch with all its limitations than this strange power of sight which now has opened.

Therefore the Teacher now sets forth a method, a discipline by which the soul may learn to use the eye of *buddhi* and to trust its baffling, unfamiliar vision more than the familiar seeing of the mind.*

The verses which follow (20–42) are not to be considered as that mere empty hymning of a personal God so dear to theists. Again it must be said, the "I" who speaks is not the personal Krishna † but the *Great Atman*, One and manifold, pervading by Its Powers all things that are. These verses contain the practical method by which the soul may learn to use and trust its eye.

The disciple is instructed to try and see in all things, not their separate being, but the *Great Atman*, by whose Powers all have their form and nature. Each type of being on earth is what it is because of the "reflection" ‡ of some

* The mind sees by analysis and separation, splitting the unity of life into the separate aspects named and pinned like insects on the board it calls science. The *buddhi* sees the unity in all and therefore Krishna teaches Arjuna how the Divine Pervading Powers are to be looked for in the things below.

† This is made quite clear in verse 37 in which the personal Krishna, son of Vasudeva, is treated as quite separate from the 'I' who is speaking. There are various ingenious sectarian ways of getting over this but still the plain statement remains.

‡ We do not mean that the Idea, locally separate, shows itself in Matter like a reflection in water; the Matter touches the Idea at every point, though not physical contact, and by dint of neighbourhood—nothing to keep them apart—is able to absorb thence all that lies within its capacity, the Idea itself not penetrating, not approaching, the Matter but remaining self-locked. Plotinus 6. 5. 8.

aspect of that *Atman*. This "reflection" is best seen in those objects which are pre-eminent within their class for it is in them that the Divine Archetype has best found expression. This is the meaning of the list that Krishna gives.* In all things, Gods or men or sages, so-called "inanimate" objects or in mental qualities, "He" is to be sought out and contemplated in the chief of every class. For, He indeed is verily the *Atman* in all beings (verse 20), their very Self, the base on which they stand.

What makes the Gods shining and powerful? It is the Light and Power of the one. What makes the *Vedas* holy, worthy of our reverence? It is the ancient Archetypal Wisdom. What is it that calls forth our aspirations in the sight of mountain peaks, calms us in sheets of water, whispers to us in trees, disturbs our hearts in animals† or thrills in gleaming weapons? What is it but Him shining through all these beings in spiritual Powers to which, if we give names, they are but poor translation for our weakness.

Even in the greatly wicked (verse 36), in him who says to evil "be thou my good," in the fierce pride of *Duryodhana*, in such a type of monstrous wickedness as Shakespeare's Richard the Third, we feel His presence compelling wonder, even admiration, in spite of all the protests of our moral nature.

We must not turn from these perceptions as mere poetic fancies saying, as many do, that after all, in fact, an animal is but an animal; a sword, a strip of steel. What is thus felt in beings is not a fancy but something truly, if but vaguely, seen within. The disciple must cling to these intuitive perceptions and by constant meditation sharpen them to clearness until the outer forms seem unreal things through whose translucid shells the wondrous Powers shine in their gleaming splendours.

As he proceeds a change will overtake his vision. Not only will he see the spiritual Power in each form but, since these Powers are united in a living whole, he will begin to *see*, what before he could but think, the vast inter-connectedness of all things.‡

In our realm all is part arising from part and nothing can be more than partial; but There each being is an eternal product of a whole and is at

* The various mythological beings and symbols that occur in this list, some of which have now ceased to play a very vivid part in even a Hindu mind, were all quite living to the man for whom the *Gita* was composed two or three thousand years ago. *Vittesha*, for instance, King of *Yakshas* (gnomes) is at best for us a hieroglyph which must be carefully translated; at worst, he is a charming old-world fancy. But long ago he was, for the many, an actual being as real as, say, the Esquimos to us, or for the few, a living symbol needing no painful learning to decipher.

† In spite of man's ill treatment of and contempt for the "lower animals" he has always felt a disturbing sense of something strange and archetypal in their being. This is the underlying cause of the "totemism" of so-called primitive peoples, of the animal Gods of the Egyptians (so distasteful to both pagan Greek and Christian) and of the animal signs in the Zodiac.

‡ These connections, vaguely intuited, give life to poetry and art. What the poet dimly senses and dares not take for more than metaphor is clearly seen by the awakened seer. It may also be added that the use of these affinities is an essential part of Kabalistic and other forms of magic, white or black.

once a whole and an individual manifestation as part but, to the keen vision There, known for the whole it is.*

Thus to the seeing eye all things are linked to all in a great Cosmic Harmony. Flowers in the green are seen as one with the far distant stars gleaming forever in the blue abyss of space. Within this six-foot frame blow all the winds of heaven, and in the heart of man lies still the glittering pomp, the sometimes cruel beauty and all the hidden secrets of long-vanished empires buried now beneath the desert sands or ocean waves.

There is a story current that on certain days, if one goes out to sea from the town known as *Dwārka*, beneath the waves can dimly be descried the towers and pinnacles of Krishna's island city. Legend, no doubt, for *Dwārka* was not there. Nevertheless beneath the storm-tossed surface of our hearts the vanished past still lives. Unseen within these depths the ancient wars are fought, Atlantis shines in glory, darkens with pride and falls; Sri Krishna walks the earth and Buddha leaves his home for love of men.

Nothing is lost, forever all remains, deep in the waters of eternal Mind. He who can plunge within lives in the Cosmic Heart and sees Its mighty throbs send forth the cycling years to run their changing through the worlds back to the blue depths of Eternity.

It is said that in a lotus seed exists in miniature a perfect lotus. So in that Mighty Being is the seed of all that is,† subtle beyond all images of sense, the shining spiritual Cosmos; infinite seeds and yet one wondrous Seed, beyond the reach of mind, yet to be seen by Mind.

All that is glorious, beautiful or mighty shines by reflection of a portion of that Being. Vainly we seek on earth a symbol grand enough to adumbrate Its glories. In ancient Egypt and Chaldea the starry heaven was Its only symbol; the heaven with its interlinked and patterned stars whirling in gleaming harmonies around the pole. But all the splendours of the cosmic depths, their mind-annihilating magnitudes of time and space, symbol to all men of eternal Law and Beauty, are but a moment of the *Mighty Atman*; infinities ranged on the shoulders of infinities; a wondrous hierarchy of living spiritual Powers where each is each and each is All and all dance forth in ecstasy the Cosmic Harmony.‡

* Plotinus 5. 8.

† *Gita*, X verses 39–42. Compare this with the so-called Naassene document: "Accordingly they (the Egyptians) declare concerning the Essence of the Seed which is the cause of all things in the world of generation, that it is none of these things, but that it begets and makes all generated things saying, 'I become what I will and am what I am.' Therefore that which moves all is unmoved; for It remains what It is, making all things, and becoming no one of the things produced." (Mead's translation)

Also compare the seed principles (logoi spermatikoi) of the Stoic philosophers.

‡ This Cosmic Harmony, known to Pythagoreans as the music of the spheres, was in the Vedic tradition termed *ṛta*, the cosmic order in which all the Gods exist. Those who find in the Vedas mere chaotic polytheism and those who find incipient monotheism are alike mistaken. Unity indeed there was, but it was not the unity of a personal being but of Divine impersonal Cosmic Order within which Indra, Varuna and Agni, the whole pantheon of Gods, all shone and had their being.

Vast beyond thought as is this spiritual realm, this flaming Cosmos of Divine Ideas, yet still beyond lies That, the One Eternal, the *Parabrahman*, Rootless Root of all.* Beyond all Gods, beyond all time and space, beyond all being even, flames Its dark transcendent Light.

From the Eternal Brahman † issue forth the *Mighty Atman*, great beyond all thought, and all the countless starry worlds that fill the wide immensities of space. Yet so vast is Its spaceless, timeless grandeur that all these wondrous emanated worlds are as a drop taken from out the ocean, leaving Its shoreless being ever full. Therefore Sri Krishna, speaking for That *Brahman*, says, "having established this entire universe with one fragment of Myself, I remain."

> "That is the Full; this is the full;
> From that Full has this full come forth.
> Having taken the full from the Full
> Verily the Full Itself remains." ‡

SRI KRISHNA PREM

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* Strictly speaking, between the *Great Atman* and the *Parabrahman* are the unmanifested Two. For convenience they are here included in the Supreme Unmanifested One.

† Out of this unthinkable abyss which is the *Parabrahman* some have tried to make a personal God!

‡ *Shanti* to *Ishopanishad.*

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame,
O Master of the Hidden Fire!
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me
My soul's desire.

In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,
O Master of the Hidden Fire,
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be
My soul's desire.

WILLIAM SHARP

REINCARNATION

[Yet two more articles on a subject which is of great interest to our readers and which **Sir Alexander Cardew** characterizes as of " surpassing importance." It is a sign of the times that a scientist of the standing of Professor J. B. S. Haldane should seriously put forward " the possibility and indeed the probability of the conception of repeated existences " in a publication of Watts and Co., whose association with The Rationalist Association is well known. Sir Alexander rightly condemns the " crude assertions " of those who assured their " credulous followers that they were conscious of having been Queen Elizabeth or Julius Cæsar." Such untheosophical absurdities have brought ridicule on the serious doctrine of Reincarnation,—one aspect of which is stressed by Professor Haldane. The second article, written by **Professor G. R. Malkani**, shows what the Hindu view is. While both contributors rightly stress the difference between the teachings of the twentieth-century Professor and the ancient Hindus, there are items in the exposition of the former which will prove important when the *modus operandi* of reincarnation is discussed, *viz.*, what reincarnates, and how ?—what happens between successive lives on earth " intervals of non-existence, possibly of enormous duration," of which the first article speaks ?—EDS.]

I.—A EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE DOCTRINE OF REBIRTH

Anyone who has lived in India and has gained even the slightest insight into the thoughts and beliefs of the people cannot fail to be aware of the profound influence which the doctrine of Rebirth or *Samsara* has had and still has on Indian thought. It is the commonest experience to hear some misfortune attributed to the influence of acts or events in a previous birth. I well remember an Indian friend, now deceased, one of the ablest and more distinguished of his generation in India, dwelling most impressively on the far-reaching effect of this Indian doctrine. To it he was inclined to ascribe the comparative calm of the Indian mind as contrasted with the restless anxiety of Europe. To the Indian, he said, an event of to-day is not merely a transient incident in an ephemeral life, but this life itself is but one in a series of lives. The European moralist may warn us of the petty nature of the present world, as Bacon wrote:—

> The World's a bubble, and the Life of Man
> Less than a span,

but the perspective becomes infinitely more impressive if we realize that life itself is but an episode in a series. My friend even suggested that the belief in Rebirth might colour men's view of domestic relations. The European looks on his wife as his partner in this world and the next, but to the Indian who believes that he has been born often before and may be born innumerable times again, the said companion of his present pilgrimage, dear as she may be to him, must rather be likened to a fellow passenger who joins him in a train and travels beside him for a while until the station is reached where it falls to her lot to alight.

The belief in Rebirth, whose effect

might be traced in many directions, has influenced and coloured Indian thought for thousands of years. It probably arose very soon after the establishment of the Hindus in India. Professor Hiriyanna, in his very learned *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, tells us indeed that except perhaps in a single passage in a *Brahmana*, there is no allusion to transmigration in pre-Upanishadic thought, but in the Upanishads themselves the doctrine is well developed, and in the system of Buddha, heretical though it was, there is no attempt to question the truth of the Brahmanical theory of transmigration, which by this time must have been firmly rooted in the Hindu mind. The date of the death of Buddha, B. C. 487,* is the first settled date in Indian history, so that we may safely regard the doctrine of Rebirth as having governed Indian thought for some twenty-five centuries, offering, as it does, an explanation of the apparently essential similarity of the vital element in all animate beings and a rational explanation of the inequalities in human life, thus affording solace under apparently undeserved suffering and removing bitterness against God and one's neighbours. In this way it has furnished Indian thought on life with a philosophic background very different from the crude anthropomorphic mythology and beliefs of Christianity, and with an element of hope and comfort well suited to sustain thoughtful minds.

A distinguished English scientist, Professor J. B. S. Haldane, has lately published under the title *Fact and Faith* a little book in the course of which he contributes a novel line of argument in support, if not of the Hindu doctrine of *Samsara*, at least of the possibility and indeed probability of the conception of repeated existences. It is obvious that in the course of eternity, *i. e.*, of infinite time, any event with a finite probability must occur an infinite number of times. Now it appears probable that only a finite number of animal types is possible. For instance, says Professor Haldane, there is not enough matter in all the known heavenly bodies and probably not in the universe to make simultaneously one fly of each of the possible varieties of *Drosophila-melanogaster* which might, by suitable crosses, be produced from the varieties now in existence. The number of possible kinds of man is probably even larger, but still finite. Moreover even if the number of possible configurations of living matter were infinite, a living creature acts so as to bring small disturbances in its structure back to its normal. Therefore by this physiological process all the various possible types of man or other living creatures would be reduced to a number which, however large, is finite. If then this finite number is distributed through infinite time, it follows from the principle laid down above, that every human type has occurred already and will occur again, and if the nature of the mind is

* According to traditions of southern Buddhism, the Buddha died in 543 B. C. Modern scholarship is tending more in the direction of this date; see for example, *Journal of the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute* (Vol. XII, part iv, July 1931) where in his article, "Some Problems of Indian Chronology," Mr. K. G. Sankar concludes that the Buddha died in 521 B. C.

determined by that of the body, it follows that every type of human mind has existed an infinite number of times and will do so. Thus on materialistic premises we seem to arrive at something not easy to be distinguished, says Professor Haldane, from eternal life. The existences which he thus contemplates may be interrupted by intervals of non-existence, possibly of enormous duration. Moreover the mind, though the same in different lives, is new each time and does not carry over any trace of memory or experience from the one to the other. It must also be noted that in Professor Haldane's view there is no reason for supposing that the mind exists apart from the body of which it is an aspect. From these ideas he infers that every two persons who meet in the present life have a *finite* possibility of meeting again and will therefore do so an *infinite* number of times, in each case to be parted once more. Such is the speculation which Professor Haldane puts forward as a logical deduction from materialism. He does not suggest that it has no difference from the theory of reincarnation but it is certainly an interesting and novel aspect of a problem of surpassing importance.

Probably Professor Haldane's view will appeal most strongly to those whose mathematical training has been such as to enable them to appreciate fully the argument resting on the distinction between finite number and infinite time; but in any case it must be admitted that Professor Haldane's speculation differs *toto caelo* from the Hindu doctrine of *Samsara* or rebirth. In the first place the denial of the separate existence of the *Atman* or soul is a fundamental divergence. The word *atman* originally meant breath and then came, as in analogies in Greek and Hebrew, to be applied to whatever constitutes the essential part of anything, particularly the soul of man, as distinguished from the physical frame with which it is associated. Moreover the *prana*, which, as vital breath, stands for this aspect of the individual, is universalised and represented as the life of the world. As, in the case of the individual, the self is distinguished from the not-self, *i.e.*, the body, so the world-self has to be distinguished from its physical embodiment, the material universe. In Hindu thought, the world-self comes to be identified with *Brahman*, the primal source of the universe, so that there is no break between nature and man or between either of them and God. In Professor Haldane's system, which he expressly says, is atheistic, God has no place. Although Buddhism and Jainism which were heretical, were likewise atheistic, the trend of later Hindu thought has been quite otherwise. Thus the *Bhagavadgita*, one of the most important documents in Hinduism, is essentially religious and has nothing in common with Professor Haldane's scientific outlook, while the Vedanta which is the consummation of Indian thought, stands for the triumph of Absolutism and Theism. Still less is there any room in Professor Haldane's speculation for Karma, perhaps the most characteristic feature of Hindu thought with-

out which the Indian view of reincarnation would lose much of its significance. As Buddha did not acknowledge the existence of the soul, the link between one life and the next had to be found in strongly felt desire, a thought also to be found in the *Phaedo* of Plato, a coincidence which leads Mr. Rhys Davids to observe that when we find two such minds, perhaps the two greatest thinkers of antiquity, arriving at the same conclusion we should hesitate to condemn it as absurd. It is true that many scholars hold that Pythagoras, Pindar, Empedokles and Plato, who entertained the notion of rebirth, owed this thought to Indian influence. Enough has been said to show how wide a gulf separates Professor Haldane's position from those of Hindu philosophy and religion. The doctrine of rebirth has indeed found little acceptance in the West except in the fancies of poets such as D. G. Rossetti and Stephen Phillips and a few exceptional thinkers such as Schopenhauer. An attractive allusion to the subject occurs in Stephen Phillips' well-known play "Paolo and Francesca," where Paolo exclaims:—

> Remember how, when first we met, we stood
> Stung with immortal recollections—
> *Thou* wast the lovely quest of Arthur's knights,
> Did I not sing to thee in Babylon?—

and Francesca replies "Or did we set asail in Carthage bay?" These vague recollections of previous encounters in past births are, of course, nothing but graceful fancies and have nothing in common either with Professor Haldane's severely logical deductions or with the mystical speculations of Hindu philosophers. Nor should they be confused with the crude assertions of certain modern dabblers in Hindu lore, who are supposed to have assured their credulous followers that they were conscious of having been Queen Elizabeth or Julius Cæsar in a previous birth! Such absurdities travesty and degrade the lofty ideas of the great Indian thinkers, Buddha, Samkara, Ramanuja and the rest, whose profound systems of thought, whether we accept them or not, must always remain some of the most impressive structures of the human mind.

ALEXANDER CARDEW

II.—THE HINDU CONCEPTION OF REBIRTH

All forms of Hinduism may be said to accept the doctrine of rebirth. But this doctrine does not stand alone. It is part of a wider conception, the conception of *Karma*.

Every living creature is reborn in order to reap the fruit of actions in a past life. We are in this way living out our past and continually making our future. How long will this process last? Will it be always so? That would, according to the Hindus, be a calamity. For whatever the joys of life, the balance is always on the side of pain. We must escape from the cycle of births and deaths. This escape is what the Hindu understands by freedom, his ultimate goal.

How is this freedom to be achiev-

ed? It can only be achieved by removing the cause. The cause is our *desire*. We do acts with desire. We want something; and when we get it we are not satisfied; we want something different. This desire creates new situations for us and new entanglements. It gives reality to the objects of desire and so to the whole world which is related to our happiness and unhappiness. If this desire could be eliminated, we should want nothing, and our actions would be completely free. Such actions would not bind us, would not cause us any future suffering. There would be no such thing as frustrated desire. We should sow no seed, nor reap any fruit. We should be emancipated, and should be free from the cycle of birth and death. Hinduism therefore advocates as a means to salvation the eliminating of desire from our lives, and doing actions without any desire for fruit. This may be done merely through self-control and self-discipline. Belief in God is not essential. But it may also be done, and perhaps more easily, through a belief in God and the dedication of all our acts to Him. The essential result is the same. We become free from desire and act without self-interest. It is only *Advait Vedanta* that goes a step farther than this. For, according to this view of reality, while desire is the cause of our bondage and transmigratory wanderings, it is not the ultimate cause. There is a cause of desire itself. That cause is *Avidya* or ignorance of the true nature of reality. It is because we are under a delusion that we are the slaves of desire.

There is another point which needs some reference in this connection, and that is the status of the soul. Hinduism believes in the self-identity and the immutability of the soul. It is exactly the same soul that suffers and enjoys the effects of its past actions, and that is ultimately freed and emancipated. This is the popular doctrine, and it is the basis of the higher philosophical view of Advaitism that *really speaking* there is only one real and immutable *Atman*, the Absolute Self or *Brahman*. Buddhism does not accept an immutable self in any sense. But still, in its theory of *Karma*, it retains intact the applicability of the principle of causality, so that each succeeding life is a continuation of the earlier. There is no strict rebirth, but the causal continuity operates beyond our present life to lives to be.

We can now assess the value of Professor J. B. S. Haldane's contribution to the doctrine of rebirth in his book *Fact and Faith*. He starts with the assumption that time is infinite. He then tries to prove that all possible animal types are finite in number. Each type has thus a finite probability; and in the course of eternity any event with a finite probability must occur an infinite number of times. Hence every type has occurred already and will occur again. Here a new element, non-mathematical in character, is introduced in the argument. The nature of the mind is determined by that of the body. If this is so, then every type of human mind has existed an infinite num-

ber of times, and will do so in the future. In short, "a mind or soul of the same properties as my own has existed during an eternal time in the past, and will exist for an eternal time in the future."

We may assume these conclusions to be valid as far as they go. But how far do they agree with the Hindu conception of rebirth? It appears to us that the agreement is of the most superficial. The doctrine of rebirth loses all its spiritual value if the soul is not seen to be independent of the body. If the soul does not survive the body, then it is never the same soul that is reborn. In fact, there is no rebirth. All that we can say is that there is new creation of a similar soul each time that a soul is supposed to reappear. And this creation is governed by no essential necessity; for according to Professor Haldane, the very appearance of life, and so of any individual whatsoever, is ultimately to be traced to chance fluctuations in the matter of the universe; and if there is any necessity, it is purely the mathematical necessity that an event of finite probability must occur an infinite number of times in the course of eternity. This kind of rebirth has nothing in common with the Hindu view on the subject.

It may be admitted that Professor Haldane's view is really different from that of Hinduism in essential respects. But does he not make a new contribution to the subject as such? We think that he does not. The view which he has propounded is not self-consistent. Professor Haldane thinks that this kind of eternal life means that personality will be able to develop in all possible environments, and to express itself in all the ways possible to it. Those who have died prematurely will be able, under other conditions, to live out complete lives. This amounts to saying that the individual can grow and develop in successive lives. He will so to say develop a new mind each time. But then what happens to the mathematical hypothesis that the same mind or an exactly identical mind must appear an infinite number of times? If he had postulated an immutable soul, we could reconcile this growth and development with identity. We could say that the same soul had achieved a higher mode of life and grown in its stature. But when there is no such immutable soul, what remains of identity? What mind exactly is eternal or reappears an infinite number of times, when each mind in its successive reappearances can change out of recognition?

It may be that Professor Haldane regards this growth of the mind as quite unreal. He says:—

> If evolution continues, it is likely that in most of our past and future lives you and I have been or will be relatively feeble-minded throw-backs among a more perfect humanity.

Shall we then remain ever the same? If we do, what value is there in all our reappearances? Will it not be a tragedy that we should remain the same while some other humanity has already advanced to a higher stage? But then what about that humanity itself? Is it not determined by the same

mechanical and mathematical laws by which we are determined? If it is, its evolution is as little intelligible as our own. In fact, it appears to us that the suggestion that we shall reappear with our present attainments in an age which is far advanced with respect to the present is quite gratuitous. There are only two real possibilities: (1) It is arguable that as my present body and mind will reappear in all their entirety and sameness, so will everything else around me. The very age and times so to say will be repeated and we shall simply be re-living what we have lived before. (2) The reappearance will not be in identical form. I shall reappear in a form which will be in consonance with the new times and the new age. Nobody can be a mere throw-back, but like a growing organism, he will gather the past into the future, and not only keep pace with time but make new times. Otherwise, the very movement of evolution in any sense whatsoever will not be possible.

Professor Haldane regards finite minds as governed by laws of the same general type as regulate other phenomena. There is nothing unique or permanent about the finite mind and so it may be expected to recur under suitable conditions. This is materialism pure and simple,—a materialism which, it appears to us, is inconsistent with its own postulates and can claim no affinity whatsoever with the doctrine of rebirth as held by some of the great religious philosophers.

G. R. MALKANI

We live in an ascending scale when we live happily, one thing leading to another in an endless series. There is always a new horizon for onward-looking men, and although we dwell on a small planet, immersed in petty business and not enduring beyond a brief period of years, we are so constituted that our hopes are inaccessible, like stars, and the term of hoping is prolonged until the term of life. To be truly happy is a question of how we begin and not of how we end, of what we want and not of what we have. An aspiration is a joy for ever, a possession as solid as a landed estate, a fortune which we can never exhaust and which gives us year by year a revenue of pleasurable activity. To have many of these is to be spiritually rich. Life is only a very dull and ill-directed theatre unless we have some interests in the piece; and to those who have neither art nor science, this world is a mere arrangement of colours, or a rough footway where they may very well break their shins.—R. L. STEVENSON

CHRISTIANITY AND LIFE

[**M. Chaning-Pearce** has, in addition to a varied educational career, spent some four years in political service in Iraq. More recently he has studied Theology at Ripon Hall, Oxford. He is the author of several books and has contributed to *The Hibbert Journal* and other periodicals. Mr. Chaning-Pearce has tested Christianity in the light of certain experiences of life and has found it to ring true. Undoubtedly —but why only Christianity? All the other great religions of the world would ring equally true.—EDS.]

The two generic and contrary hypotheses of reality which divide the faith and conduct of men are that of the naturalist, for whom spiritual, and that of the spiritualist, for whom natural, values are negligible. For the former the concept of a spiritual and metaphysical world, for the latter, that of the natural and physical world, is no more than "Maya" and illusion. And since it is, in the long run, that which is for us reality and not illusion which controls our conduct, each hypothesis inevitably begets its complementary and contrasted ethic.

Christianity proclaims an hypothesis of reality which is neither the one nor the other, for which the natural is the spiritual, the physical the metaphysical, and reality, though from one point of view an irresolvable dualism, from another is an indivisible unity. For Christianity life is not neatly and logically divisible into appearance and reality; the appearance is the reality, the reality the appearance. The distinction between them exists, not in essence, but in the eye and spirit of the beholder. In Peter Sterry's words, the Christian, though planted in earth, "is ever in Heaven and hath Heaven in himself."

Again, since the Christian hypothesis of reality postulates a radical inversion of the order of nature, a reality which is, as it were, the order of natural life turned inside out and upside down, upon that hypothesis we must expect a complete transvaluation of values in which what is significant and important for natural life and knowledge is insignificant and unimportant for Christian life and knowledge and vice versa.

We are thus confronted with an hypothesis of reality for which our life is outwardly and apparently dual but inwardly and really one, a reality which is both immanent within and transcendent to our life, in the world and yet not of it.

Imaginative insight confronts us with the evident fact, in the well-worn aphorism of Pascal, "le cœur a ses raisons, que le raison ne connait point." Here is an opposite approach to reality from that of the scientific reason, and its findings would seem to be as opposite as its approach. Here are the findings of the Heart; they would seem to be irreconcilable with the findings of the Mind. For the imagination, the analytic eye of reason seizes the fact and misses the fire; for reason, the imagination wastes itself on an ignis

fatuus. For the imagination, in the late Mr. Clutton Brock's words, "only the passionate life is wise"; for reason, in those of Bishop Butler, the imagination is a "forward and delusive faculty."

To dismiss these findings of imaginative insight as fantastic is as unrealistic and unexistential as, in their favour, to dismiss those of the reason. Their existentiality at least cannot be questioned. Is this "heaven," this "eternity," this "wisdom" for which poets, artists, saints, mystics and lovers gaily "lose their lives" wholly illusion unrelated to reality? Reason, colour-blind to this aurora, has no answer, or but a sceptical one, to give. Life has another answer, another knowledge. For in life, in their season and place, we confidently trust and act upon these "reasons of the heart," and the least of us is not without his personal and empiric test of their validity for life. For all, in some measure, have loved and known their moments of insight. That experience, that insight, may have been fleeting as the flight of a jay, a brief flash long lost in oblivion's night or in the "light of common day." But, while it lasted, did it "ring real," feel real?

Christianity affirms that its "wisdom" is from "on high," a gift bestowed upon us rather than a prize to be grasped by us or that which our art and labour can achieve. When we consider wisdom as distinct from knowledge, the wisdom of the simple, of the saint, of the seer, the rare and random flashes of insight and understanding of life which we ourselves have known, do they not always seem to be rather of the nature of a gift from beyond our nature and capacity than that which we ourselves have fashioned?

The contrast between wisdom and knowledge points the distinction. Knowledge is the trophy of tension; wisdom is the reward of surrender. Knowledge, scientific, rational knowledge, is a trophy won from life, a taking of the kingdom of truth by storm, by the violence of the mind and will: *wisdom is ever, it seems, the result of a "letting-go," a surrender to life, not indeed merely to the superficial life of the senses, but to some deeper "Life of life" beyond and beneath it. Knowledge is gained; wisdom comes.* Again our deeper experience corroborates the testimony of Christianity.

Moreover such wisdom seems ever to be stamped with the seal of immortality; like the classic excellence of the highest art it gives to us the sense of inevitability, universality, peace and permanence. Such wisdom, like life itself, seems to contain all reality within the particular word, line, or pattern in which it is invested and to be one and abiding with the Whole of being in an ultimate calm.

It is the constant refrain of religion, a refrain upon which Christianity has woven her web of doctrine, that our life here and now is a dualism. The saying of the sage of *Ecclesiasticus*—"Look upon the works of the Most High; two and two, one against another"—affirms a dualism in our life the insistence upon which is the very

warp and woof of the Christian faith. It is a dualism which all our experience of life, both without and within, confirms.

"Two and two, one against another"; life and death, light and darkness, upspringing and fall, ebb and flow, good and evil, joy and sorrow; all the life of our world is shot with this primordial and dual pattern. And the dualistic pattern of being which our outer life proclaims our inner life repeats. "Two and two, one against another"; masculine and feminine, Mind and Heart, Aristotelian and Platonist, conservative and liberal, classic and romantic, catholic and protestant, priest and prophet; between such fixed and constant poles of our being flickers the vital spark of the Spirit of Man.

That deep dualism is the basic pattern of the individual as of the general soul. That there are two distinct and contrary selves within us the most ancient and enduring wisdom has always taught and the most modern psychology but repeats in another tongue. We know a higher and a lower will and self. "The evil that I would not that I do"; Paul's classic statement of that inner duality is one which every "modern" will endorse in his own fashion, however his conception of good and evil may vary.

For the ancient wisdom of the East, as for all religion and for Christianity in particular, this psychological dualism has always been a fundamental axiom, the task of religion ever the discovery and release of an inner and more real Self, a Self which is within the superficial self and yet not of it. "Know thyself"; "the kingdom of heaven is within thee"; "the word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart"; the fundamental wisdom does not falter. That wisdom proclaims a psychological dualism which Christianity reiterates and all our experience of life confirms.

And since the self creates its own world, this dualism of the self projects its complementary dualism of worlds. Since we harbour within us two selves, we also inhabit two worlds.

Christianity affirms an "inner selfless self of self, most strange, most still" and this constant assertion of stillness and silence as the essential climate of the Kingdom of God and of the soul is one of its most characteristic notes. The world of the physical self is a world of shouting and of strife. But the world of this "inner selfless self of self" is of a wholly other order, "most strange, most still," where broods a "central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation."

This emphasis upon stillness and peace as the very pith of the reality which it proclaims is central in the Christian conception; it is significant that it is not peculiar to it and that wherever understanding seems most profound that note is most present. "Be still and know that I am God," says the Psalmist. It is with a "still, small voice" that the inner Reality sounds in the ears of the prophet. "In silence God performs all things," says an ancient Greek proverb. "I am a silent one and to talk is not my custom," says

Plotinus of Nature.

Christianity takes up the refrain, not as a "grace-note," but as the *leit-motif* of her music. For Ignatius, the Logos is that which "proceeds from the Silence." "A deep Silence of all created Objects ushers in the Appearance of God in the Soul," said Peter Sterry. "Keep thou quiet that thou mayest hear what the Lord thy God sayeth to thee," said the turbulent Luther. "God is the fountain of life which begins its quiet murmuring when once we turn away from the externalities of the world and bow before him in silence," says Karl Barth whose theme is more often the thunder than the stillness of God. Such sayings could be indefinitely multiplied from the literature of Christianity. [And, may we add, of every other religion.—EDS.]

The climate of Reality is thus a stillness at the heart of storm, a stillness beyond storm. It is once more a finding with which that of our own deepest experience of life seems to tally. That such a stillness is characteristic of the supreme summits of artistic achievement, is indeed almost a hall-mark of classic excellence, needs little argument for those who can appreciate that excellence. In such an air of brooding calm dwells the Demeter of Cnidos, the immortal riders of the Parthenon Frieze, the immobile garden and rapt Madonna of da Vinci's Annunciation, the still women and hushed rooms of Vermeer; into such calm passes at last the storm and tragedy of Euripides and Shakespeare and the tumult of Beethoven's "Sturm und Drang."

But it is not only for the mystic and the artist that the recognition of this stillness as an essential feature of esoteric Reality finds an existential response. Does not our most intimate experience of life lead us to a similar silence? There must be few who have lived near to nature who have not sometimes felt that it is within such a stillness that the corn grows and nature spins her seasons, in such a stillness that the mother awaits the opening of her womb.

Who has not known some moment of "still communion" with life poised upon such a peace, and the "liquid, clear perceptions" with which such a peace endows us? In such a stillness we sense our unity with life, lovers know their hearts and their incommunicable knowledge and the saint the holiness of God. And there are few who have lived deeply and long who will not testify that when they were most still they were most wise or that their moments of most intense living were also moments of most profound stillness.

M. CHANING-PEARCE

A MEDIEVAL MYSTIC
JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA

[**Dr. Margaret Smith** concludes this month her interesting series.—EDS.]

John the Scot (Johannes Scotus), known as Erigena, was a Celt, who was born, most probably in Ireland, between A. D. 800 and 815, and he was still living in A. D. 877. The details of his biography are very scanty and little is known of his early life. It is said that he travelled widely, in Greece, Italy and Gaul, and that he studied not only Greek, but Arabic and Chaldean. His appreciation of Greek thought and his knowledge of the philosophy of the Alexandrian school lend some support to the view that he may have travelled in Greece. He appears to have been neither priest nor monk, but a layman, though he was the most eminent doctor of his time. The story that he was invited to France by Charlemagne and was one of the founders of the University of Paris is not supported by trustworthy evidence.

Charles the Bald, the youngest son of Louis the Pious of France, who was made King of Aquitaine in A. D. 832, aimed at being considered a great patron of learning, and to this end invited to his court some of the most distinguished scholars of the time, so that it was popularly asserted that Greece was deserted of her learned men and Ireland denuded of her philosophers, through their attraction to the Frankish Court. Among those who were drawn to this centre of intellectual life was John Scotus, later called Erigena, who settled there about A. D. 843, probably at the invitation of Charles the Bald, who gave the Irish scholar a warm welcome. Scotus came to be on terms of intimate friendship with his enlightened patron, by whom he was appointed to the Mastership of the Court school (*Schola Palatina*) at Paris, which though not yet the ordinary seat of government, was a favourite residence of the king. At the Court of Charles he lived and wrote. There was a story current in later years, but not well authenticated, that in A. D. 882 he was invited by Alfred the Great to Oxford, and William of Malmesbury, writing in the first half of the twelfth century, tells of the coming of John Scotus to Malmesbury Abbey as master of the monastic school, and of his being murdered by his pupils there; but the historicity of this is also somewhat doubtful.

Not long after his arrival at Charles's Court, the Irish scholar, who was recognised as a man of wide learning for his times, was given opportunity to prove the value of his scholarship to his adopted country. In 827 the Byzantine Emperor Michael had sent to Louis the Pious a copy of the works of the Syrian monk Dionysius, the so-called Areopagite, whose mystical theosophy, though Christian in

form, was based mainly on Neo-Platonist sources. The gift was deposited in the Abbey of St. Denys (near Paris), who was identified with Dionysius the Areopagite, and search was made for a translator who could make known to the Western world the contents of the books. Erigena, with his reputation for Greek scholarship, seemed marked out for the task, and he was therefore commanded to translate the Dionysian writings into Latin. He was responsible for the translation of *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, *The Divine Names*, *The Mystical Theology*, and the *Letters* of Dionysius.

The introduction of these books to the West was momentous in its ultimate consequences, but it was no less so in its immediate effect upon their translator, for it was after this that he appears to have made a study of the teachings of Plato, Aristotle and Porphyry, as well as the writings of Maximus, Gregory of Nazianus, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine and Boethius.

Erigena, in addition to translating the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius, wrote commentaries on them, and also treatises on *The Soul's Coming Forth from God and Its Return to Him* and on the *Vision of God*, but his most famous works were those on Nature (*De Divisione Naturae*) and Predestination (*De Divina Praedestinatione*).

Erigena's system is a combination of Neo-Platonic mysticism, emanationism and pantheism, linked up with Christian doctrine in a metaphysical scheme which he has succeeded in making very complete. In his methods of thought, in his opinions, and in his style of setting them forth, he stands alone in his age, in which, says one writer, "he appears as a meteor, none knew whence." In his originality and his uniqueness he is to be compared to that earlier Neo-Platonic mystic, Iamblichus (*c.* A.D. 284—*c.* A.D. 330).

In his treatise on Predestination, Erigena states his view that true religion and true philosophy are identical, and that the solution of religious problems can only be effected by the study of philosophy—a re-echo of Iamblichus—and true philosophy, he holds, rests on the basis of the Unity of God. In his teaching on the nature of the Godhead, the Ultimate Reality, Erigena insists on this truth from first to last. "Nature," by which he means all that has existence, of which the mind can take cognizance, he divides into four classes: Firstly, that which is Creative but not created, the First Principle, the Absolute Godhead, Ultimate Reality; secondly, that which is both Creative and created, the prototypes or primordial causes, which are identical with God, the Divine attributes of goodness, wisdom, power, majesty, which are united in the Godhead and diffused in the world of phenomena; thirdly, that which is created but not creative, reality, emanating from God, the Absolute Reality, passing through the ideas into the region of the sensible world and becoming subject to multiplicity, change, imperfection and decay; fourthly, that

which is neither creative nor created, the Ultimate Reality under the aspect of rest, when all things have returned into the primal Unity, and God shall be All in all.

The fundamental thought in Erigena's doctrine is that Nature, the Universe, the Totality of existence, is God the Only Reality manifested in plurality in the world of individual existence, which is in truth but a theophany, a showing forth of the Divine Essence in the things created. "All things are from God," he writes," and God is in all things and nothing has been made apart from Him, since from Him and by Him and in Him are all things [made]."* His pantheistic trend is made even plainer in his statement that "God is everything that truly is, since He makes all things and is made in all things."† Real being and absolute perfection belong to God alone—all else has only derived and imperfect being. "The being of all things is the Over-being of God." But the Absolute Reality is above all categories and therefore it is safer, Erigena holds, to use regarding that Reality the negative mode of predication, and say what God is not, rather than what He is; and it is not improper to call Him Nothing (*Nihil*), being Incomprehensible Essence. Only in this sense can creation be considered as a making of something out of Nothing, for actually all proceeds from God, who is predicateless Being. "Creation" is the manifestation of the Divine Thought, the unfolding of the Divine Nature, and as the Ideas which emanate from the Infinite Essence are eternal, manifesting themselves in the world of creatures, so also creation is eternal, timeless.

Erigena deals very fully with the problem of evil, in his consideration of the Nature of God. What is good, he declares, cannot be the cause of evil, nor can the Totality of Being be the cause of what destroys being —misery, sin and death. Therefore things have reality only if they are good: "being without well-being is nought." Evil possesses no substantial existence; it does not come within the knowledge of God. Since there is no necessity above God, what is true of the Divine will is true of predestination, and there can be no movement of the Divine will towards evil. Predestination, which Erigena distinguishes from foreknowledge, is therefore in one direction only, not towards sin and punishment, but towards grace and eternal happiness. The only sense in which Determinism can be accepted is that of God's permission of what happens to the creature through His gift of free will, but God cannot know of evil, for if He did, He would be its cause: the Divine knowledge cannot be separated from the Divine will, which is the cause of all things: evil, then, in relation to God, is simply the negation of good.‡

Erigena conceives of the Nature

* *De Divisione Naturae*, III, 22. † *Ibid*, III, 4.

‡ Cf. R. Browning:—

"The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more;
On the earth the broken arcs, in the heaven, a perfect round."

of God as a Trinity in Unity, representing Being, Wisdom and Energy, but these are only nominal distinctions, not representing distinction of essence in the Godhead.

Man is the culmination of the process of being from God, for he is the summing up of Nature, being possessed of reason, understanding and sense, combining the highest and the lowest elements, the "meeting point" between creation and the Creator.

He understands and reasons as an angel: he has senses and administers the body as an animal.

Man is made in the image of God and the soul partakes of celestial being, but the union of Divine and human can only be adequately contemplated in the Heavenly Man, the Word Incarnate, the supreme theophany.* Man, then, in his inmost essence, is one with God.

In so far as man participates in the Divine and heavenly life he is not [an] animal, but by means of his reason and intellect and his thoughts of what is eternal, he partakes of celestial being. In that part of him, then, is he made in the image of God, whereby alone God holds converse in men who are fitted for it.†

Erigena regards man also as representing a trinity in unity, for he says that there is a threefold motion or rotation of man about the Divine Centre. The first and innermost circle is that described by the Intellect, that power of intuition which recognises God as the Principle of its attraction, and the Source of its enlightenment, but recognises Him as the Absolute and Incomprehensible Reality. The second circle is that of Reason (the Logos or discursive faculty) which recognises and acknowledges God as the primary Cause of all that exists, and realises His action through the primordial ideas. The third motion is that of the "senses," which is the perception of the working out of those ideas in individual action.

Man has free will as part of his nature, whereby he is made in the image of God, and this leads him to sin when it is attracted to what is outward and lower rather than to the inward and the higher. Erigena quotes the case of two men looking at a golden vase, in one of whom it arouses feelings of admiration and in the other of envy, but there is no evil in the vase which is the object of these feelings.

The evil, therefore, is not implanted in human nature, but it is caused by the perverse and irrational action of his reasonable and free will. ‡

The senses are attracted to what appears to be good, and so the inner man "wherein naturally dwelleth truth and all good" becomes corrupt and sins. Evil, then, exists only in the perverted tendency of the human will, which is in itself good. But as it cannot be said that God knows of evil, so also man, when he assumes the Divine point of view and considers

* The doctrine of the Heavenly Man, or the Primal Idea of man was found in Proclus and later, as the Perfect Man, the copy of God and the archetype of Nature, uniting the Creative and the creaturely aspects of the Divine Essence, manifesting the oneness of Thought with things, in the teaching of the Sūfī al-Jīli (A. D. 1365—A. D. 1406). Cf. my article in THE ARYAN PATH (December 1931).

† *De Div. Nat.*, IV, 5.

‡ *Ibid.*, IV, 16.

the All in its entirety, sees nothing evil, and the Divine part of man must in the end reassert its power. Evil, therefore, will come to an end and will not remain, since in all the Divine nature will manifest itself.

> Our nature, then, does not remain fixed in evil: it is ever moving forward and seeks naught else but the highest good, from which as from a beginning its motion takes its source and to which it is hastened as to an end.*

The soul, therefore, seeks to return whence it came; and it begins the ascent when it discovers the illusion of the evil at which it has been aiming, and so is delivered from sin. Since the whole realm of created nature is a theophany, the soul can attain thereby to a knowledge of God, recognising His Being through the being of created things, His Wisdom through their order and harmony, His life-giving Energy through their activity and movement. So, to Erigena, all Nature is instinct with God, all is sacramental, the material pointing to the spiritual.

> What is the glorious sun in heaven but a type of the Divine glory? This whole universe, in its beauty and its harmonious order, is but the sign and symbol of the beauty and harmony which lie beyond all the reach of sensual perception.

The human soul itself is the chief manifestation of the Divine, wherein His Presence may be known and felt.

> As many as are the souls of the faithful, so many are the theophanies.†

So the soul realises that its chief end is to become one with God through becoming like Him, an end to be attained by purification, enlightenment and completion. The stages of the return to final unity, corresponding to the stages in the creative process, are numerous and are reached and passed by degrees. Sin is selfishness and selfishness is the destructive influence which keeps man from realising his great capacities, so that he must first be cleansed from self-centred sin, and then, by the contemplation of virtue, the soul can be changed into that which it contemplates,‡ and the growth and establishment of the virtues means the gradual deification of the soul. By the help of the Divine grace man can rise superior to the needs of the animal body, and learn to place the demands of reason above those of the bodily desires. From the stage where reason is uppermost he can ascend through contemplation to the sphere of the primordial ideas, and thence by intuition—that gnosis which is insight into the Divine mysteries—to God Himself.

Reason, contemplation and intuition are the three degrees by which perfection is attained, and man must pass through these if he is to free himself finally and completely from that bondage into which he has been cast by sin, and attain to that union with the Divine in which salvation consists. That ultimate goal is deification; theosis, resumption into the Divine Being, when the individual soul is raised to a full knowledge of God and there is no more opposition of thought and being, for knowledge and being have become one. In the

* *Ibid.*, V, 25. † *Ibid.*, I, 8, 9, 10. ‡ *Ibid.*, I, 9.

contemplation of the Absolute Nothing, the pure and perfected soul at last loses itself, yet this is not annihilation, for its individuality is preserved.

This therefore is the end of all things visible and invisible, when all visible things pass into the intellectual and the intellectual into God, by a marvellous and indescribable union, but not, as we have said before now, by any destruction of essences or substances. *

The soul has now attained to that full knowledge of God in which the knowing and known are become one.

Precious is the passage of purified souls into the intimate contemplation of Truth, which is the true blessedness and eternal life.

And this deification is to be not only of the individual soul, but of the universe, for all things are to return unto God, and in this restoration and redemption of the universe, evil vanishes away.

True reason teacheth that nothing contrary to the Divine goodness and life and blessedness can be co-eternal with them. For the Divine goodness will consume evil, Eternal life will absorb death and misery.

As all things were originally contained in God and proceeded from Him into the various classes and forms in which they now exist, so they shall finally return to Him and be gathered up and re-absorbed into their original Source and all things thus become deified. After all things have been restored to the Divine unity, there is no further creation. The ultimate unity is called the end of all things. This is the fourth class of those into which Erigena divided Nature, that "which neither is created nor creates," for after all things have returned into it, nothing further will proceed from it by generation in place and time, in kinds or form, since all will be at rest within it and will remain an unchanged and undivided One, for God has become All in all.

Erigena's teaching, therefore, rests on a pantheistic basis, a philosophical system derived from Neo-Platonism, the result of the profound influence exercised upon him by his study of the pseudo-Dionysius. Like Origen before him, he endeavoured to lay a philosophical foundation for his theology, and he was, in fact, a Christian theosophist.

Though the doctrines of John the Scot appeared sufficiently unorthodox to draw upon him ecclesiastical censure, they were so far in advance of the ideas of his time that they were not generally understood in his own age. He left some few disciples, but it was not until much later that the value of his writings came to be realised. It was through him that the influence of the so-called Dionysius was transmitted to the West and it was in the speculative spirit of John the Scot that both the scholasticism and the mysticism of the Middle Ages had their rise.

MARGARET SMITH

* *Ibid.*, V, 20.

For the life of John Scotus Erigena cf. William of Malmesbury; A. Gardner "Studies in John the Scot."

For his teaching cf. his *De Divisione Naturae* and *De Praedestinatione* (Migne. Patrologia XXII): F. D. Maurice *Mediæval Philosophy;* R. L. Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought.*

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

A History of Magic and Experimental Science. By LYNN THORNDIKE. Vols. III and IV. Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries. (Columbia University Press, New York. $ 10.)

The search for "the philosopher's stone" and the "Elixir of Life" has gone on through the ages and is bound to continue, so intriguing are their possibilities. At no historical period in the West have more thinking men attempted to solve these problems than in medieval times. These two volumes present the results of searching study of a difficult and doubtful subject, extremely elusive of comprehension or co-ordination. Based on MSS., codices and incunabula hitherto unexplored, as well as on published works, these volumes deal with the scientific and philosophic thought of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the two previous ones dealt with the two preceding centuries. The bulk of the volumes is justified by the intricacy and interest of the subjects and by the enormity and weight of the matter dealt with.

The origins of "magic" and of all "experimental science" of medieval Europe—alchemy, geomancy, necromancy, sorcery, witchcraft, theurgy, aeromancy, hydromancy, pyromancy and a host of other names ordinarily unintelligible—are sought in the early philosophic thought of Greece. This in its turn owes a great deal to India. The stories in connection with the theories of the medieval philosophers show similarity to the allegories in the *Mahābhārata*, for instance. That on p. 100 of Volume III is a case in point. And many of the medieval notions relating to natural phenomena, earthquakes, floods, famine, diseases and the like, recall those in ancient India. They seem to be based on one or two fundamental ideas, familiarly Indian, the unity of the manifested world and the fact of every object being endowed with "life," but for which, no such transmutation as was sought in vulgar "alchemy" is possible.

The universe is "pāñcha-bhautika," man himself being an epitome thereof, the microcosm of the macrocosm. "The philosopher's stone" has to be sought, therefore, within oneself. Witness the following few statements culled from alchemical literature:—

> "Triumph over the poisonous serpent indeed marks the last stage of projection in the alchemical process."

> "The philosopher's stone" is found "in the loftier of two mountains, both rich and poor may possess it, nay, it is cast into the streets, while anything costly is found deceitful and useless in the work of this art."

> "Everything connected with the stone is one."

The point seems to be that "life" is there; and the attempts of philosophers, theologians, medicine-men and scientists are only to evolve its various forms and phenomena and determine their correlation. Only in a sense, therefore, can a transition or evolution be spoken of from the medieval to the modern age in science. It may only be hoped that, as scientific research advances, more and more of this mystery, *viz.*, the unity of matter, mind and spirit, will be revealed. It has been superstitiously held that the depth of the immersed portion of butter in buttermilk is an index of the knowledge of itself to which the world has attained. It is one out of ten. In spite of the distance science has travelled, an ocean of knowledge remains unexplored. It involves "the deciphering of a profound cipher."

These volumes canvass many departments of human thought and belief—theology and metaphysics, humanism and scholasticism, astronomy and phys-

ics, geography and cosmology, chemistry and meteorology, medicine and surgery, pharmacy and toxicology, botany and zoology, physiognomy and necromancy, Joachimite prophecies and mathematics. Many of these topics receive illuminating exposition in the monumental works of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. Of special interest in the books under review are the chapters on Alchemy of the Later Middle Ages, The Precious New Pearl, Geoffrey of Meaux, John of Rupescissa, Oresme, Works on Poisons, and Astrology in the Later Fourteenth Century, in the Third Volume; and, in the Fourth, those on Astrological Prediction, Surgery and Medicine, Theology and Astrology, Censors of Superstition, Alchemy Through the Fifteenth Century, Magic in Dispute, and Astrology at Bay.

Professor Thorndike has laid the world of learning under a deep obligation. The candid modesty demanded by the stupendousness of his undertaking is evidenced in the concluding chapter.

S. V. VISWANATHA

The Doctrine of Survivals: A Chapter in the History of the Scientific Method in the Study of Man. By MARGARET T. HODGEN. (Allenson and Co. Ltd., London. 5*s*.)

The origin of civilisation is a very old subject of controversy. Has civilised man developed from a condition closely resembling that of contemporary savages, or are such savages themselves the degenerate descendants of men who stood at a comparatively high level of culture, are questions which were hotly debated in the nineteenth century. The problem was generally supposed to have been decided once for all in favour of the developmentalists by the famous doctrine of survivals, which was propounded by E. B. Tylor in works published in 1865 and 1871. Survivals, according to Tylor, were those customs, folk-tales, games, superstitions, and the like, which have no intelligible meaning at the present time, but which he supposed to have had a meaning originally in relation to conditions existing in the past, especially the savage, prehistoric past which is the hypothetical background of civilisation and history. The existence of survivals was held by Tylor and his followers to prove the actuality of such a savage past; and they believed that by the study of them they could reconstruct the origins of such basic human institutions as the family, religion, legal codes and culture generally.

Miss Hodgen has earned the gratitude of all students of mankind by putting at their disposal a succinct account of the survivals theory. She tells us about the controversies which preceded it, how it was accepted as axiomatic by Andrew Lang, G. L. Gomme, and most of the other anthropologists of their period, and finally how more recent scholars have riddled it with criticism and shown it to be anything but axiomatic.

The present position of the controversy is indicated by Miss Hodgen's concluding words:—

> The anti-progressionist argument implicit in the criticisms of the doctrine of survivals is more formidable than the position assumed by proponents of the theory of the degeneracy of savagery. Barring the appearance of an advocate more persuasive than a second Tylor, developmentalism may well suffer defeat, and the study of man be launched out upon seas of discovery guided by new instruments of navigation.

Which is extremely suggestive.

R. A. V. M.

Meet Yourself. By PRINCE LEOPOLD LOEWENSTEIN and WILLIAM GERHARDI. (Faber and Faber, Ltd., London. 6s.)

This book is described as containing about three million detailed individual character studies through self-analysis. The first portion consists of thirteen groups of questions. The first and second groups enquire about your childhood and family experiences. The questioner then wants to know many curious things; for example, whether you sometimes have a sense of unreality, or impending calamity, or nightmares, or unreasoning fears, ending up with a surprising enquiry as to whether mickey mouse films frighten you. Then come questions about your nervousness: whether you wonder if you have locked the door, put your letters in the wrong envelopes; and are you irritated by disorder or disturbance to customary order? Next health, social and love matters, your feelings about the future, dreams about kings (no mention of queens!), blushing, day-dreams, your opinions about artists, your views about alcohol and milk, and many other things.

After answering these questions you find yourself placed in one or other of fifteen fundamental character types, which are given the names of rivers for convenience. In these pages you receive a statement of your character straight from the shoulder, so to speak. Our authors do not mince matters, and they do not flatter at all, which is all to the good. I promptly read all the fifteen, and cannot say that I want to belong to any of them—not for long, anyhow!

Following your endowment with the name Thames, or Rhine or Seine, or Volga, or whatever it may be, you are faced by 208 paragraphs describing what you are likely to do, feel and think—and why—in various human activities and relationships. Interspersed with these are 40 small questionnaires and directions. Not that the whole 208 paragraphs apply to you. Probably you will receive a dozen or twenty, as you are directed from one to another according to your River-name and your replies to the small questionnaires. After putting ten people through the system I found that one friend had fifteen sentences before reaching his terminus, another had only nine, and the others came between those in number.

Quite apart from testing anyone's character, I found the 223 paragraphs very interesting reading, containing instructive and clever side-lights on human motives—sometimes, I thought too clever and losing a little balance, through apparent love of quirkish possibilities. There seems to be no provision for the ideal character—the person who never fails in love, thoughtfulness and activity—but perhaps our authors think that we are all conglomerates containing many weak substances, and that the simple, pure and strong character does not exist at all.

As to the fitness of the paragraphs for the persons tested, I can say that it was not bad. But it reminded me of a ready-made suit of clothes—it fits generally, but it does not fit in parts or rather in places. So let not the reader or experimenter expect a close fit. Still he will, I think, find that his analysis fits him much better than any of his friends, and that his friends' analyses fit them respectively better than they would fit himself. On the whole I would describe this as an entertaining book, containing much of interest to the student of human character and many useful hints to the reader who cares to analyse himself with its aid.

ERNEST WOOD

The Voice of Omar Khayyam: A Variorum Study of his Rubaiyyat. By JAMSHEDJI E. SAKLATWALLA. (Qayyimah Press, Bombay. Rs. 2-8.)

This is a confessedly discursive work, by a Parsi gentleman keenly interested in the life, works and legends of the great Persian poet and very widely read in all kinds of curious knowledge, Eastern and Western, modern and medieval. The dominant theme that runs through the book is the thesis that the true Omar was a mystic and not a sensualist, and that the wine he praises and longs for is not the juice of the grape but the symbol of the Sufi's union with God.

Mr. Saklatwalla pursues a comparison between the *Rubaiyyat* and the *Book of Ecclesiastes*, as expressions of "the very original Irreligion of Thinking Man." And Omar, the representative voice of an age of free thought, is more of a doubter than a disbeliever.

The charming discursiveness of Mr. Saklatwalla is well illustrated in the section on "Omar Khayyam at School—The Story of the Three School Friends," of which the conclusion is that the story "must be considered to be a legend such as grows round the memory of a great name." Another power of Mr. Saklatwalla, that of vigorous vituperation, is shown in the outburst against Dr. Hastie's "rabid sentimentality, shattered nerves, ill-digested study, ignorance of Sufi philosophy and doctrines, and self-blinded, vomiting, neurotic hatred."

There are many grammatical slips and misprints in the book, which should be set right in the next edition.

The illustrations, which are numerous and beautiful, are true to the atmosphere of Omar Khayyam, but bear no rigid relation to the text of the present work.

K. SWAMINATHAN

Indian Mosaic. By MARK CHANNING. (George G. Harrap and Co., Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

A Message from Arunachala. By PAUL BRUNTON. (Rider and Co., London. 5*s.*)

We have here two striking books, both by foreigners, giving their impressions of the spiritual realities of India. The author of *Indian Mosaic* was in the Indian Military Service for twenty years and had his superiority complex shaken by being initiated into Hindu wisdom under the guidance of a Brahmin Guru. Not that his natural prepossessions do not occasionally surge up and spatter political mud; but soon the mud settles and the tranquil waters of spiritual sympathy, deep and broad, compose themselves once more to reflect the inspiring mystery of Hindu philosophy. Written in a vigorous and fascinating style, the book presents a kaleidoscopic panorama of Indian life in some of its ramifications, through which panorama Mr. Mark Channing is seen as being moulded by Indian influence. At the end he tries to effect a happy synthesis of the East and the West. A Guru would say, he feels assured, that the West should hold fast to its own religion and civilization and at the same time seek to absorb Indian wisdom; this will ensure a richer harmony and bring the two "closer to the attainment of a world-brotherhood and peace transcending the rivalries of faiths and creeds."

In *A Message from Arunachala*, we feel the human touch. It is dedicated to the "Maharshee" of South India to whom the gifted author turned to be led to direct and soul-felt contact with spiritual reality. But Mr. Paul Brunton is not here concerned with any institutional religion. On the contrary, he looks about with a scientific eye and seeks what he calls "an aerial view" of modern life. And he states clearly what his aim is: "I am content to work as a free-lance and to toss a few ideas towards an appreciative minority." He, however, is as painfully conscious of "the almost certain mockery of the mob," as he is anxious not to be mistaken for a "philosopher who runs about the world looking for problems in order to solve them."

Naturally, therefore, the book, while full of the charm of restrained beauty of expression, bears the impress of a vivid personality walking by the light of his inner vision through the surrounding wilderness of spiritual stupidity whence the reader emerges with him to a place of strength and joy.

ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI

Ta Hio: *The Great Learning*. Newly rendered into the American Language by EZRA POUND. (Stanley Nott, London. 2*s*.)

Probably the world has never stood in greater need than it does to-day of the counsel offered in the *Ta Hio,* the first chapter of which is ascribed to Confucius himself and the remainder to his disciple, Thseng-Tsen or Tsang-Tzu. The close correspondence of the moral and political ideals outlined here and the ancient Indian codes of conduct will at once strike the reader.

Confucius has hardly been excelled in skilful depiction of the chain of causation, in which he shows each link to be at once an effect of a preceding cause and a cause of a succeeding effect. It is significant that the first step towards governing well one's kingdom is "penetrating and getting to the bottom of the principles (motivations) of actions," in other words, self-examination leading to self-knowledge, which the Indian scriptures also stress, *e.g.*, the *Bhagavad-Gita* with its emphasis on action without concern for its fruits.

The essential for moral growth, deliverance from the dangerous trio, wrath, fear and passion, finds a parallel in Upanishadic teaching, and the methods for perfecting moral knowledge correspond to the dictates of the *Niti-Sastra,* which the *Smritis* style "the spring of virtue, wealth, enjoyment, and salvation." The stern necessity for every one to do his duty, and the regulation of conduct by the example of the great sages and kings of the past echo the precepts of the *Gita.*

The ideal of kingship, "What the people love, to love that; and to hate what the people hate; this is called being the father and mother of the people"—is a truly Indian conception, and bears comparison with the duty of princes in the promotion of the commonweal, as detailed in the *Dharma* and *Artha Sastras.*

As regards the choice of counsellors, the *Ta Hio* lays down rules identical with those of Kautilya; expelling the intractable "to live with the barbarians at the far corners of the empire, or at least out of the Middle Kingdom" is just the idea contained in the section "Removal of Thorns" of Kautilya.

There is no modern state that would not profit by those in power applying the precepts here set forth, but the latter are by no means applicable only to the ruler.

> From the man in highest dignity, down to the humblest and most obscure, duty is equal (for all): to correct and better one's "person," that is the fundamental basis of all progress, of all moral development. . . . A man who has not corrected his own tendencies to injustice is incapable of putting order in his family.

Mr. Pound's rendering is generally felicitous, though unusual, as was to be expected in this "ideogramic series." This occasionally lends pungency to the text, removing it effectually from the atmosphere of musty academic tradition and making the teachings almost startlingly modern. Thus the familiar but stilted rendering of the inscription on the bathtub of King Tching-thang, "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again," becomes in Mr. Pound's American version, "Renovate, dod gast you, renovate!"

The contribution of Confucius himself consisted of forty-six characters in the original and the translation fills but three pages; the annotations of his disciple fill only twenty-two, but within this slender compass is compressed a very treasury of wisdom. The commentator wrote and the translator underscores:—

> *One should meditate on it for a long time, and one will never succeed in exhausting the sense.*

S. V. V.

The Problem of Rebirth. By THE HON. RALPH SHIRLEY. (Rider and Co., LONDON. 5*s.*)

This book is written for the "Little Public" that is interested in the "problem of what we are, and to what bourne our destiny beckons us." The author has succeeded in demonstrating that of all conceivable explanations, Reincarnation alone "offers a satisfactory solution of the problems of life," besides being "in accord with our knowledge of natural laws."

A "galaxy of genius," poets, philosophers and mystics who have been attracted to this doctrine are quoted, and the concept of rebirth is studied from different angles, religious, scientific, psychological and ethical.

The evidence selected from the records of Psychical Research, is of very doubtful value. All abnormal phenomena such as "dream-travelling" and "psychic memories," "hypnotic experiments" and "automatic writing" really prove only the existence of invisible forces in nature and psychical powers latent in man. These are no proof of reincarnation, nor even of the survival of the human soul after death. Even the wonderful instances quoted of children claiming to remember past lives may not necessarily be cases of *soul-memory*. But lack of knowledge may be overlooked in face of a fair number of facts collected here—even though at times irrelevant—which makes it a useful compilation.

The book is unjust to Madame Blavatsky, who laboured incessantly to demonstrate to the Western World that Reincarnation is a fact in Nature. In such authentic Theosophical literature as Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy* will be found all the very arguments which the author has quoted in favour of rebirth, and in *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky there is much knowledge which would have helped the present author. To say that at an early stage Madame Blavatsky was a sceptic on the question of Reincarnation and only became convinced later on, is to indulge in fancy and to repeat a mistake. The amazing statement that "most of the Theosophical teachings on Reincarnation were "taken direct from the alleged spirit communications of Allan Kardec" betrays not only lamentable ignorance of Theosophy, but gross irresponsibility in writing of a topic without any adequate study.

Again, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* are not automatic scripts inspired by so-called spirits of the dead. Madame Blavatsky's own statements and explanations as also the records of those who were present when these two books were written ought to have enlightened the author on what the facts are, and made him reject his own fanciful notions. It may be beyond his capacity to understand the metaphysics and psychology of the two monumental works, or he may lack time to read the volumes; but surely if he had studied even the smaller work, *The Key to Theosophy*, he would not only not have done injustice to Madame Blavatsky and her pure Theosophy but also would have improved his own book which fails to do full justice to the subject, and is poor in instruction about the doctrine. It takes the reader down several side-paths without enlightening him. For these and other reasons it does not compare favourably with the old volume published in 1888—*Reincarnation: A Study of Forgotten Truth*, by E. D. Walker.

There is an increasing demand for knowledge about Reincarnation. Its reasonableness is accepted and what intelligent people are looking for are answers to such questions as "What is it that reincarnates?" "How does reincarnation take place?" "Where does the human soul abide between two lives?" and "Who is it that enjoys or suffers in life and after death?" To those who wish to learn we may recommend (a) Chapters VIII, IX and X of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, (b) Sections VII, VIII and IX of *The Key to Theosophy* and (c) *U. L. T. Pamphlets*, Nos. 8, 9 and 10.

N. K.

Sense and Thought. By GRETA HORT, M. A., Ph. D. (George Allen and Unwin, London. 8*s*. 6*d*.)

If Greta Hort had confined herself to dispassionate psychological reconstruction of the mechanism of the mystic mind and its evolution, as revealed in the *Cloud of Unknowing* and the *Epistle of Privy Council* of a fourteenth-century English mystic, who for the benefit of a pupil had recorded something of the difficulties, the longings, the visions, and the goal of realization of God as one's own being, she would have earned the grateful appreciation of students of mysticism. Her attempt, however, to demonstrate that the fourteenth-century mystic had enjoyed practical realization of God with a theoretical metaphysic of the Absolute of Bradley and the Concrete Universal, does scant justice to the claim of mysticism grounded on exalted theism. Her admiration for Bradley and Bosanquet, the fascination for her of the "concrete universal"—(Why not capitalize the words?)—and the Absolute and her approving allusion to Professor Muirhead's alluring absurdity that "body is the potentiality of the soul," are sufficient evidence that she has prejudged the entire philosophic issue and approached a study of the *Cloud of Unknowing* with an unshakable prepossession in favour of Absolutism.

The author of the *Cloud* desired to know God. His desire was as keen as his ignorance was impenetrable. One day both ignorance and desire appeared to him as a cloud of unknowing "betwixt him and his God" which was to be pierced only by love and longing desire. Subsequently, however, one finds *three* clouds. How the cloud or clouds had been rent asunder by love of God, by ecstasy, by the mystic's critical turning round on his schemata of love, goodness, and God, is described in detail.

I regret to note that on two problems of tremendous mystic and metaphysical import, namely, the problem of God, and the problem of Sin or Evil, Dr. Hort has obscured the truths embodied in the *Cloud*. If God is the Whole, if God and the mystic "grow together," and if the mystic experiences the "joy of doing God's creative work," then, either the mystic or God will have to feel, like Othello, that his occupation is gone. If "sins" according to mystics, "do not divide from God," if God cares just for "what thou wouldst be," and if according to the author of the *Cloud* sin means "the lump of sin, none other thing than thyself," there is still the philosophic obligation to explain the actual and matter-of-fact division from God experienced by mystics and laymen, the evaluation of self as sin or "lump of sin" and the feeling of assurance that God cares only for what thou wouldst be. It seems to me that the *Cloud* is a theistic document, not an absolutistic one. For otherwise how could "*he*" "disengage himself from that *entity*" and "place *it* in the hands of God."?

I am afraid further that Dr. Hort's psychology needs revision. She speaks of "self," "mind," "soul" and "consciousness" for the existence of which experimental psychology developed in Europe and America affords no evidence. Her discussion of cognition, affection and conation would seem to perpetuate in modern psychology a trinity to every limb of which a certain amount of independence is granted. In Indian Psychology three powers of the Self are spoken of—*Jnyana-sakti*, *Iccha-sakti* and *Kriya-sakti*. Each must involve the others. Their so-called independence is grounded only on emphasis or predominance regulated by pragmatic purpose or interest. Students of mysticism will welcome Dr. Greta Hort's absolutistic interpretation of the *Cloud* and the *Epistle* only to discover subsequently the truth that they are theistic documents. On this unintended service she must be congratulated.

R. NAGA RAJA SARMA

Diet and Commonsense. By MRS. C. F. LEYEL. (Chatto and Windus, London. 6s.)

Alas for the word "diet"! How it has degenerated from its Greek original "diaita," "way of life," even though it has taken the place of religion as a way of life for many, with its ardent devotees, its thousand and one conflicting sects, its pontiffs' authoritative pronouncements!

A book, therefore, with the promising title of "Diet and Commonsense" whose author has studied the century-old food lore because she perceives its scientific basis, whets the appetite in anticipation of good things. And there are many good things in the book, a simple presentation of calories, vitamins, organic mineral salts, special diets, and even unusual items such as seaweeds among the classified foods and recipes. There are titbits of information such as that "for centuries nuts have had the reputation of preventing hardened arteries, due to a particular salt they contain which softens the muscular wall"; that mushrooms are the only vegetables that "exist like animals, breathing in oxygen and giving out carbonic acid"; that onions absorb poison, and all cruciferous plants act on the blood, while highly coloured vegetables, containing vitamin A, like spinach and tomatoes, increase the red corpuscles, two theories put forward by the old Doctrine of Signatures.

But one begins to doubt the common sense on finding also such things as a recommendation of an "excellent" cure for whooping cough, for children of three and over, containing rum, and such statements as "meals are the only constant and continuous pleasure that man enjoys"—which we can only hope is meant to be taken with a grain of salt.

Though each one must suit his diet to his own make-up, common sense would include all aspects of the latter, and an occasional slight dictatorial flavour in the book is perhaps due to the omission of the psychic and ethical factors. We are told, for example, that the extractives of wine "are bloodmaking, while the ethers which are produced by the action and reaction of the alcohols and acids, stimulate the brain and heart." Incidentally in another place we find, "Very little is known scientifically about either the ethers or the extractives." Yet though the ultimate depressive action of spirits is mentioned, nothing is said about the well-known effect of even moderate doses of alcohol, in dulling the mental judgment and self-control, and in deadening the synaptic junctions of the nervous system, producing loss of co-ordination.

On the question of meat, again, the moral aspect of the animal slaughter might possibly be considered by Mrs. Leyel as outside her province, although the unnecessary suffering involved points to a lack of heart imagination in people, and it is not common sense to feed the body by starving the soul. It would, however, surely come within her scope to examine, for example, the correspondence of diet and temperament. Each kingdom has its generic qualities, those of the vegetable kingdom being—to use the terms of Indian science—of the nature of *prana*, or vital "magnetic" energy, and those of the animal, of kama, or desires and passions. Whether mankind needs to absorb any further animal "kamic" qualities is a very dubious question. We need *human thinkers* so badly, not mere cattle and sheep, and though change of diet *alone* will certainly not work the miracle—vegetarians of the cranky type are proof positive of that—still it does play a certain part.

There is waiting a whole field of research on the inner properties of food. Mrs. Leyel has already gone further than most. If she will extend her study to take in not only Western lore but also Eastern, which has retained more of a scientific character—*The Laws of Manu* might make a beginning—her next book should hold an even greater interest.

W. E. W.

Christian Economics. By BRIAN DUNNINGHAM. (Stanley Nott Ltd., London. 1s.)

This little book is a frank attempt to define the position the Church might occupy to-day in regard to the economic situation in England. The volume consists of five chapters, dealing with the present chaotic order of the world, the problems of production and consumption, money and its power. The remedy for the evils of the present system is, according to this book, Christian economics. All these chapters are made up of selected quotations from the speeches and writings of prominent Churchmen, a sprinkling of Members of Parliament, bankers and others. These quotations are expected to serve as vigorous attacks on the present-day financial and economic systems. With the help of these quotations, Mr. Dunningham tries to point out where and why the systems break down, elucidates the economic foundations of a Christian Society and urges all Christians to use the tenets of their religion as a live weapon in the arena of economics.

Appealing to the public, and in support of Mr. Dunningham, the Dean of Canterbury says in the Preface:—

> Christians must speak with no uncertain voice against the destruction of commodities and restriction of production. There is enough for all. Poverty is an anachronism. Science, power and machinery have made public a new age of physical plenty, and that which is physically possible can and must without delay be made financially possible. Reason, justice and humanity demand it, and no Christian can neglect the challenge.

The quotations which the book contains are all excellent and very well chosen, though the ideas they embody have now become more or less the possession of the common man.

But what is really disappointing is the utter failure of the book on its practical side. Its programme for ushering in this new society based on Christian economics is wholly inadequate. The approach to the question of reorganization is from the standpoint of the individual. "And because," declares this book, "you don't realize your responsibility but remain passive, these economic worries are your fault, so that you have the blood of thousands of suicides on your head." How is this new order to be brought about? The author says it can be brought about through propagating the ideas contained in his book and by organizing reading circles! One can hardly understand how individuals, who seem so concerned about the collapse of civilization, could satisfy themselves with so futile a programme of remedy for the immediate cure of so serious a malady!

If a new society, such as is envisaged in the book, is to be ushered in, it can only be done by planned control of the resources and machinery of the world in the interest of all. A reconstruction of society on the basis of "Christian economics" cannot be carried out by mere wishful thinking. Nor can it be brought about by individuals alone, for in the present world system the individual counts for nothing; vested interests mean everything. If the Christian forces are to make their influence felt, if they are to carry out a programme of reconstruction, it is necessary for them to organize. Christian workers and consumers must be organized. Further, it is also necessary to organize a Christian political party to work in season and out of season for the reorganization of modern society on Christian economic principles. The Church has done enough talking and preaching. The world is facing a crisis. Let the Christian forces mobilize for action.

J. M. KUMARAPPA

THE LAND OF PSYCHE AND OF NOUS

Travelling in the Astral—G. R. S. Mead a Spiritist—Extra-Sensory Perception—What Is the Self?—Multiple Personalities—The Light Dawns at Oxford.

We hear much in these days about psychic manifestations on the part of living persons when "out of the body," otherwise, the "astral projection" of an etheric counterpart of the material envelope. One is reminded of those "travellings in the spirit vision" which were a favoured practice of certain occultists in the 'eighties. Instructions for the development of this gift are even now extant, though there are no printed texts. The astral body is identified with the Soul by Mr. Stanley de Brath,* and is regarded as the organ of the Spirit or "hidden but essential Self." It has even been suggested that the exploration of the etheric counterpart may help "to solve the problem of man's survival" after death more directly and simply than communications with departed spirits. On the contrary, if "disembodied spirits" can and do return with news from their invisible world, there is always a bare possibility that, one of these times, we may get something of valid consequence respecting life on the "other side," whereas astral journeys are almost invariably from place to place in the world about us, though occasionally as if illuminated by a "light that never was on land or sea."† It has to be realised, moreover, that the records of these visitations, being purely personal, are without evidential value. The well-known work of Sylvan Muldoon on *The Projection of the Astral Body* is a notable case in point. To say this is not to throw down a challenge but to register an inevitable matter of fact, his testimony being much too important to be accepted on his unsupported word.

An incautious writer has affirmed recently that "man's Survival of bodily death" is "the eternal problem." If words mean anything, an eternal problem is one that can never be solved; and if this be the case with Survival, all associations of spiritists, their periodicals, their "churches" and their "sittings" should be suspended once and for all. Societies for Psychical Research should also shut their doors: the paranormal conditions of sensitives may demand investigation by pathologists, but lay observers have no title to intrude therein. It happens, however, that the Rev. Rowland W. Maitland‡ does not mean what he says, but only that the question of Survival is a matter of palmary and living consequence. In this amended form the statement will appeal to those who have never grown tired of themselves, of that

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* *Light*, July 9, 1936, p. 435. The view is old and well known.
† *Ibid.*, 440, being recorded experiences of Mrs. Annie Brittain.
‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 433, 434.

"little me" which is flouted occasionally by unserious persons, who are also at war with English. *Non omnis moriar* is a hope of others, and there will be some among them who will add that "it must be so," either because Plato reasons well, because of the Self which abides behind the self, or—in the last resource—because of "proofs palpable" and expanding records of research. Amidst the welter of activities in psychical and metapsychical realms, a few will pause to ask what it is that we would save—if haply possible—from the crematorium fires. Is it something more than the "glory of going on and still to be"? Is it an improved opportunity for harbouring "virtuous thought" and pursuing that " great intent," of which Edmund Spenser wrote in the "spacious" days of Elizabeth? Is it reunion with those whom we have loved or cared for here? The last is the recurring answer, which fills the whole prospect and offers the perfect picture, though so many of us have tired of one another even in this life. It is still the incentive presented by Spiritists in nine out of ten cases, while the normal inquirer is contented to ask no more, being assured already by the programme that he and his are liberated from the conventional beatitudes and horrors of Christian eschatology. It follows that the trance lucubrations of Andrew Jackson Davis, which were delivered in reams and volumes before the Rochester knockings began, are still the favoured gospel of Modern Spiritism, though corrective voices are heard from time to time. His other side at its highest is all so like the Elysium of the Greek Mysteries, promised to Initiates and to them only, that one marvels why some enthusiast has not produced a thesis on the identity of Spiritism and the Secret Tradition of Eleusis. As he drew towards his earthly end, G. R. S. Mead, founder of the Quest Society, became a convinced Spiritist, under the influence of a very different trance medium from the American Seer. His scripts and other messages made known to Mead that those who were Papists in this world, those who were double-dyed Protestants, those who were Victorian materialists carried their faiths and their follies into the immediate next state and gave a pretty bad time to spirits of rival views. Here is an alternative prospect of reunion which leads one to pause and think, perhaps with an eye turned to the late Vale Owen and his panoramic heavens of sentiment, which were not unfit Paradisos for the columns of the *Weekly Dispatch.* It is not surprising that some who accept Survival on the faith of psychic evidence are disposed to doubt whether that uncertain term may also spell immortality. "Men with men" may "meet together in a kindly life and free"; but the fact of that pleasant intercourse has no everlasting titles. Furthermore, the true reunions are in the last end, or the uniat state in God.

Mr. G. N. M. Tyrrell has published the records of experimental researches in Extra-Sensory Perception and concludes that such perception is a fact, no other explanation

covering the entire evidence. His investigations are in progress, and he desires co-operation from "orthodox science," represented by psychologists, in an attempt to solve the psychological problems involved. It is needful above all things "to devise a technique for the effective control of those levels of the self below the conscious threshold, which are concerned in the externalisation of extra-sensory material." * The task, in Mr. Tyrrell's opinion, demands attention (1) because it promises to cast light upon unexplored "recesses of the human mind" and also (2) to "widen the perceptual channels on which all knowledge of the outer world depends." It is recognised inevitably that the phenomena of such perception are still "scientifically disreputable"; but if that fashion of regarding the subject "would become out of date" the writer offers his personal assurance to those with whom he pleads that "a field would be opened to psychology" which would prove not merely of primary interest and importance to entrenched orthodoxies but also to mankind at large. Which of us will not wish success in his appeal to this earnest investigator, the record of whose "further researches" fills four octavo sheets? And it is all too likely that his plea will prove akin to "horns of elfland faintly blowing" for those in the orthodox citadels. They are as liable to emerge and tell him "whether the dissociated states of sensitives" are not perhaps many—and so on and so forward—as was *The Athenæum* likely, in its palmy days, to welcome and acknowledge a new poet, or a Quarterly of an earlier epoch to crown John Keats. It follows in this case that research must continue questing, must make its own further discoveries, must answer those questions which it asks in vain of reluctant oracles of the moment. And surely—in the long run—it is better thus, and thus it has always been. Do not let us owe to a master that which can be won for ourselves.

Dr. S. U. Lawton would probably concur herein, not that he is concerned with extra-sensory perception, but rather with "the nature of the Self" † and naturally therefore with the subject of its persistence after physical demise. If it should be possible to prove this, the demonstration would make—he believes—an indescribable difference for those who are now alive "and for all generations to come." He does not enjoin, however, an appeal to the exponents or masters of something called orthodox science. He decides that the question of survival is "the special business of Psychical Research," and that the "best, most critical and controlled mentalities" should weigh the evidence which it offers. He has perhaps had enough of the masters, after examining a multitude of views on the Self of Schopenhauer and Freud, the Self

* *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, July, 1936, *passim*.

† "The Nature of the Self" by Shailer Upton Lawton; *Journal of the American S. P. R.*, June, 1936, pp. 173–179.

according to Darwin, and Emergent Evolution, the Self in Naturalism and Realism, among Dualists and Idealists, and in fine "the Self of Mysticism." He leans on his own part a little towards the mystical outlook but marshals a sheaf of contradictions thereon. He does not shrink from affirming that the Inward Self is "of the same stuff as the Absolute" and yet can contemplate what he terms its "individual rights." He can talk of "union with the Absolute" and yet depend on Psychical Research to demonstrate the fact of Survival.

And so the debates go on, with never an end in sight, while the *cui bono* question looms continually at the back of each competent mind. There is nothing better substantiated in the sphere of things paranormal than the amazing multiple personalities of the American girl Fischer, and her case does not stand alone; but for those on the search for Reality they lead nowhere. The "footfalls on the boundary of another world" are about us more often than ever and perhaps sound more clearly; but even supposing that they suggest familiar presences, which were once among us and now have a home elsewhere or a tarrying-place, those "voices from the void" which come to us between the footfalls can at most tell us, darkly and from far away, of our own to-morrow, but nothing of the eternal issues. So also the mind—if any—on the other side is coloured continually by the mediumistic mind on this one, and we know not where we are. It calls, moreover, to be registered with the utmost clearness that automatic scripts on the "hither hereafter" subject are in precisely the same position as the astral travellings of Mr. Muldoon: They are devoid of evidential value because they stand or fall on the good faith of the scribe, about which no one knows save only he or she.

We may leave the psychic fields and have recourse to schools of religion, but only to find that current speculation is vacant hereupon. Professor J. W. Buckham has been telling us that "philosophy, psychology and ethics" have all been "probing into the nature of selfhood," but results obtained have not been "sufficiently specific and concentrated."* His contribution, however, to the matter of "discarnate selves" sets aside that of their "continued conscious perdurance" and offers to contemplation the fact that they continue to exist for us, in the sense of the influence which they leave behind. Here is the teaching of Comte summarised in a convenient nutshell. It follows that Professor Buckham's "School of Religion" in California has no message on the ultimate destiny of man. Turning therefore at long last in a very different direction, we are called to remember another aspect of thought. For the American philosopher personality is the core of our being and reality; but for the Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions at Oxford, Sir. S. Radha-

* *The Hibbert Journal*, October, 1936, pp. 67–74.

krishnan,* speaking in the light of Asia, our "conscious waking self" is but "a little wave" flowing outward from the mighty waters of our secret being. It is by the exploration of those inmost waters and so only that we enter into an ever increasing knowledge of our real selves, the destiny and goal of man. This is life in the eternal part of us, the eternal life which is "here and now." It is the knowledge of that "Great Self" which is Truth, Beauty and Goodness within us. It is also immortality attained. We know whence we come and whither we are going. It is not found in Spiritism or sought in Psychical Research.

A. E. WAITE

CORRESPONDENCE

UNEMPLOYMENT AND LEISURE

At no time in the history of the world has civilisation been at such a difficult turning. It is as though the tools had got out of their masters' control, and were now working on their own, useful here, harmful there, ruthless everywhere —a blind force killing its creators.

Just back from India where I spent some time alone in a hut of the Kangra Valley, I am struck, on my return to Europe, by the agitation and restlessness which pervades the Occident. I have yet to "hear" the voice of silence which I had learnt to listen to in my solitude.

Uncontrolled movement seems to be at the present time the characteristic of Europe; and uncontrolled movement brings about both physical and psychological agitation, restlessness and fear. People avoid quietness: they cannot face it. Telephone, wireless and other such inventions are perhaps used only to satisfy the dying civilisation's need of noise and company, to keep away its fear of loneliness. But is it a dying civilisation? And are these inventions not, as Shri Meher Baba would say to Mr. Paul Brunton, a wonderful means to co-operation of thought and action in all the countries in the world? Are we not the infants of a new era, the tools of which we have not yet learnt to use, and still handle as mere toys in the hands of children?

The trouble lies probably in the fact that whilst a child is seldom left alone with a knife, we have been given power to use the knife, but have no wisdom or experience to decide as to what and where to cut, and *why* to cut. It is the lesson we have to learn before we can hope to grow up. The result of this state of affairs is the feeling of unsafety and danger which pervades every country in Europe.

The aim of most Occidental inventions seems to have been to lessen man's share of material difficulties, of actual manual and non-intelligent work, giving him more physical comfort and leisure. So that now we are actually entering the Age of Leisure (as compared to the Machine Age), but whilst we have learnt to work for "the Fruit of Work," as the *Bhagavad-Gita* would put it, we now must be taught how to use this leisure, that is to say, how to "find in no work Work."

The practical way to this very old conception is for the modern mind to realise the delusion of the usually admitted thought: "Money is Wealth." It is not. Goods are Wealth, and con-

* *Ibid.*, s. v. "The Supreme Spiritual Ideal," pp. 26–39.

sidering that the production of goods requires less and less labour every day (bringing, therefore, more and more leisure every day), the saying should become: "Leisure is Wealth"; but until one has learnt what use can be made of leisure, and until one has realised that leisure *does not* mean unemployment, the problem will still remain.

At the present time, we are not yet adjusted to this new state of affairs, so that the existing social and financial systems are operating on out-of-date principles. "We are attempting," says Mr. A. L. Gibson in one of his lectures on Social Credit, "to run the Flying Scotsman on wheelbarrow financial principles," the axioms and basic principles of which are the same exactly as they were in the age of handicraft.

The result of this maladjustment we unfortunately have before us: Italy had no choice but to go to war or to have civil war at home: this gives *some* kind of employment to men's leisure . . . England, France, America, only to speak of the greatest nations, know unemployment and starvation in the midst of plenty; Germany gets ready for war at a speed which terrifies her neighbours—but is not that a way of employing men, of keeping them, at least for some time, from starving? It helps towards the consumption of goods which otherwise, because of the social and financial organisation still in credit, would remain unsold, or as America would have it some time ago, would be destroyed before the eyes of her starving people who could not afford to buy the food.

Well might Dr. Norwood say in his first sermon in the City Temple, after his world tour:—

> I am almost heartbroken with the world's beauty, wonder and fertility side by side with its hunger, weariness and hate. We have conquered scarcity but we have no technique for handling abundance. The world is frightened of the earth's fertility and is practising contraception upon the seeds of wheat, on wool, sugar, cotton, silk, rubber, rice, tea and coffee, stifling at birth the fundamental necessities to man, for fear of disturbing prices.

The present financial system which is supposed to reflect the economic facts of the time, obviously does not; but it controls the facts by the merciless pressure it imposes upon industry, compelling "for financial reasons" the destruction of goods. Destruction and restriction are being enforced everywhere in order to maintain an out-of-date financial system.

But this is by no means the only part of a tragedy which, if it lasts much longer, might well bring civilisation to its end. The destruction of the bounties of God is nothing compared to what is happening in the hearts of men: suicides are becoming more frequent every day,—and what is the most usual cause for suicide, if not the difficulty men find in trying to make two ends meet?

With the creation and perfecting of machinery, we are reducing the need of human energy, yet, the common idea is that providing work is the solution to the problem of unemployment. We have to face the fact, in the Occident—and India too might have to face it one day, unless Mr. Gandhi attains his aim—that unemployment is a permanent feature of modern life, and is going to increase whilst the work of applied science develops.

This fact, which probably fills the average man with despair, should, on the contrary, fill us with delight, for does it not mean that now man, at last, has reached the point he has been aiming at ever since a thought had entered his head? Another effort is now required of him: the adjustment of both his thoughts and actions to this new conception of life which has now left the realm of Utopia to become an acute reality; and it seems that unless some drastic step is taken, the restlessness and agitation, the chaos, the fear which now pervade the Occident can do nothing but increase. The wonderful possibilities given to mankind will more and more rapidly die out, if people forget the quietness, the balance and cosmic equilibrium of a world of which they are but a part.

Paris CLAUDE LAYRON

ENDS AND SAYINGS

Seven years gone. THE ARYAN PATH was started in January 1930, and with this issue completes the first seven years of its life. At great sacrifice its promoters have been able, month by month, to maintain the high standard of its contents and have laboured faithfully to be true to the ideals for which the journal was brought into being. Its aim may be described as threefold.

To serve the cause of spirituality and culture, which is neither Oriental nor Occidental but Universal, and the highest expression of which in every age and clime is epitomized in the term Theosophy—a noble word of grand tradition which had fallen upon evil days due to the ignorance and the carelessness of many who called themselves theosophists. Even to-day the public is mostly unaware of the fact that between the philosophy of the Sages and the fancies of the psychics a difference as great as that between night and day exists. THE ARYAN PATH has steadfastly presented the lofty and inspiring teachings of the Sages while pointing to the contagion of the psychics' vapourings.

In modern times this dual task was performed most fully by H. P. Blavatsky to whose teachings we have consistently pointed. These are gaining increasing recognition in spite of, perhaps because of, the Ephesians and the Hares who have but clumsily repeated in our decade the vagaries and the falsehoods of the Hodgsons and the Homes of a previous generation. The teachings of pure Theosophy have survived, and will survive, such poison-gas attacks. Those only who study them know their value, and that study necessitates walking a new way of life, which is the old, old way.

The Path is the Narrow Way which leadeth unto life and which can be walked by any Jew or Gentile, Brahmana or Mleccha, provided a universal, impersonal view of the world and its humanity is taken. The Path is not for the sectarian—religious, political or social—but for the courageous soul who, recognizing the enemy within, undertakes to fight the hell made by lust and anger and greed, and aspires to let the Light of Divinity in him reveal the solidarity of all mankind. For such an aspirant THE ARYAN PATH provides instruction.

To put into motion ideas which are infallible because they are universal and eternal; to disseminate the truths of the Wisdom-Religion, which are as old as thinking man and are verifiable by thinking men to-day; and to point to their record most suitably made for our era—in this triple task, time, money and labour have been freely spent. While thanking our many friends, known and unknown, for their generous support in the past, we ask for its continuance so that we may go on with our task.

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